GSA: CORRUPTION AS A WAY OF LIFE

INQUIRY

MAGAZINE

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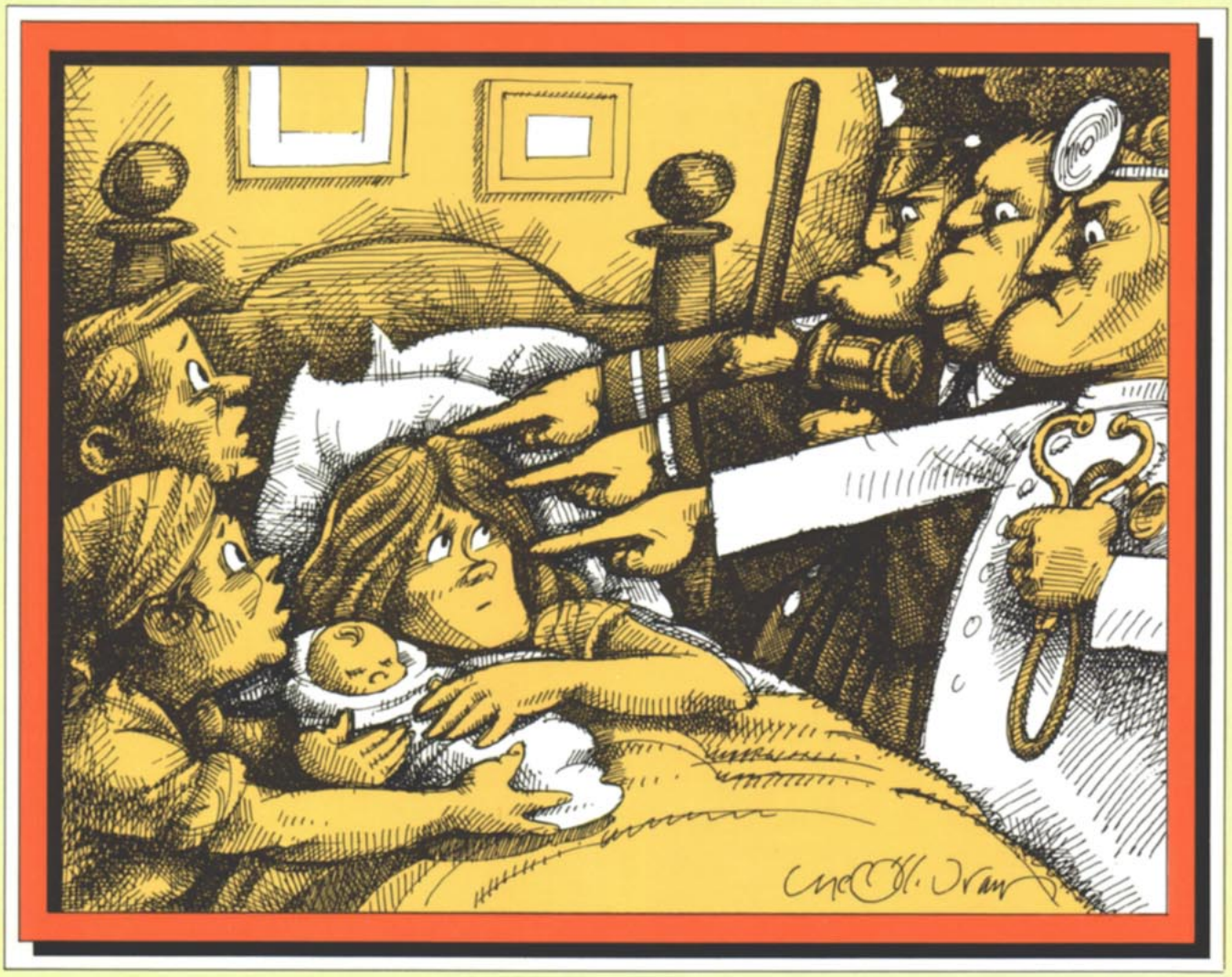

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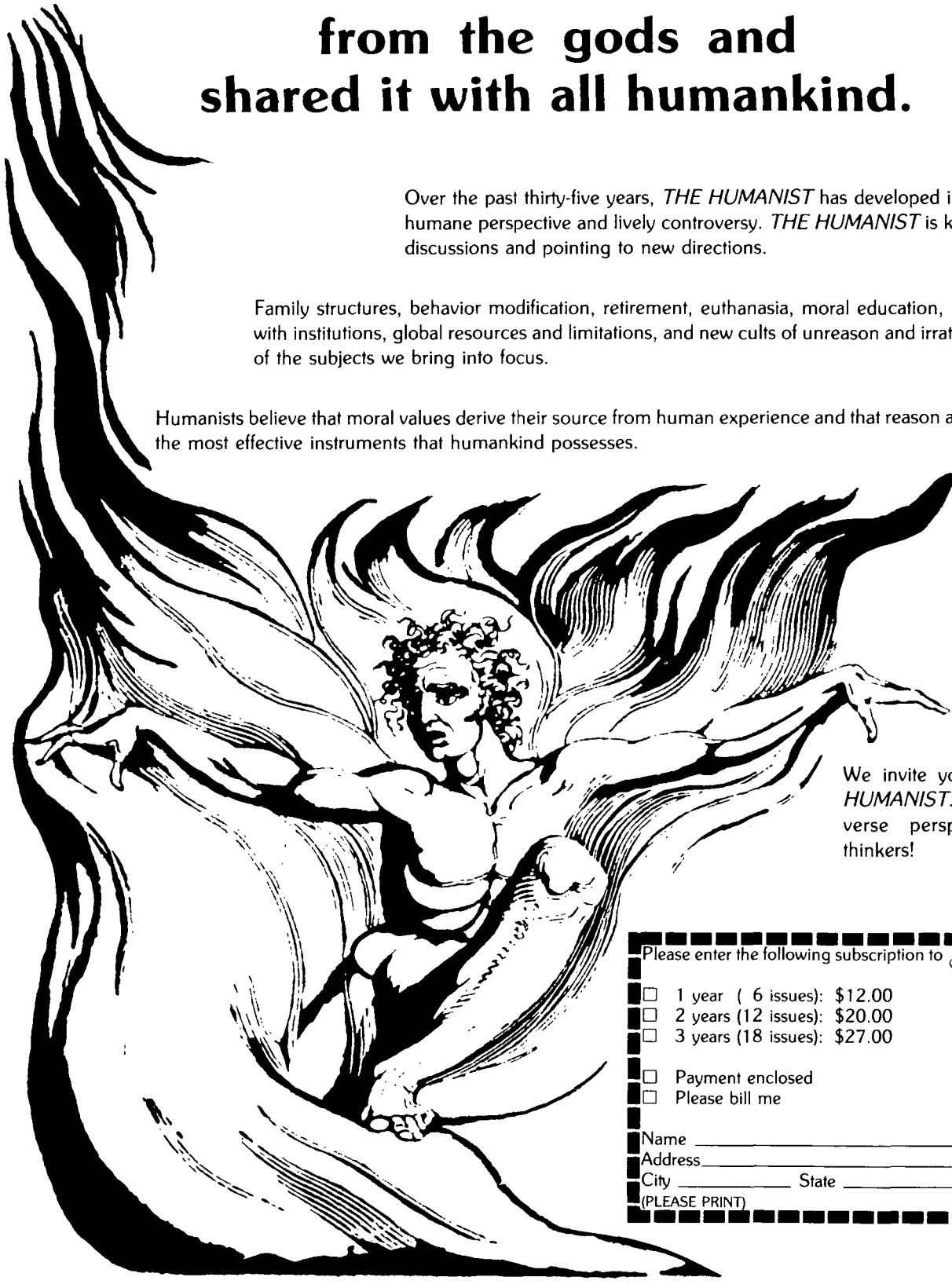

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DECEMBER 25, 1978

Buried alive in the USSR
LUDMILLA THORNE **p. 13**

The fight against home birth
SUSAN STERN **p. 17**

Inquiries ..... **p. 2**
Therapeutic State
The devil's fool,
by Thomas Szasz ..... **p. 4**
Politics
The GSA ripoff,
by Donald Lambro ..... **p. 5**
The Democrats' chameleon politics,
by David Osborne ..... **p. 8**
JFK: The unsolved murder,
by Paul Hoch & Jonathan Marshall **p. 10**
Books
Reviews *by Penny Lernoux, X. J. Kennedy, John C. Weicher, Russell Stetler & Georgia Smith* ..... **p. 21**
Film
An Autumn Sonata & Comes a Horseman,
Reviewed by Stephen Harvey ..... **p. 29**
Letters ..... **p. 32**

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The arsenal of democracy

■ At a private meeting earlier this week with leaders of his ruling Liberal Party, [Nicaragua's] President Somoza reportedly vowed once more not to resign and warned that a civil war, probably with foreign intervention, was in the offing. But, according to well-placed sources, he added that he had the full support of Brazil and Israel, which over the last 18 months has replaced the United States as Nicaragua's main arms supplier.

—New York Times, Nov. 12, 1978

The Germans will be happy to hear this

■ "They [the Soviets] have no need for a neutron weapon," said Senator Samuel A. Nunn, Jr., Democrat of Georgia. "The neutron weapon is a defensive weapon designed to be used on one's own territory."

—New York Times, Nov. 18, 1978

Look at it this way: if nothing had happened, they would have been right

■ Several officials said that a critical limit on American involvement [in Iran] was the lack of hard intelligence data. . . . "The CIA simply missed the whole thing," said one high-ranking official, adding that when the rioting began, the agency was putting the final touches on an intelligence estimate that said the Shah faced no significant internal threats.

—New York Times, Nov. 15, 1978

Imagine that

■ For months now, American steelmakers have been complaining loudly of unfair competition from abroad. . . . [But] since early this year, a number of American steelmakers have been quietly buying ever-increasing amounts of coke from foreign sources. What's more, to hear some U.S. coal producers tell it, the prices these American steel concerns pay for imported coke not only are lower than those for the domestic variety, they also are lower than the foreign suppliers' cost of production.

—Wall Street Journal, Nov. 14, 1978

And that's the way it is

■ A major new Government-backed loan program, aimed at helping disadvantaged Americans buy broadcasting stations, has channeled funds to only seven members of minority groups out of its first 32 transactions worth $7.8 million, the Small Business Administration said today. . . .

"Seven loans out of 32 is 22 percent, and we don't think that's too bad," said Jean Nowak, chief spokesman for SBA. "But Tom Brokaw, that hurts." Mr. Brokaw, host of the "Today" show on NBC, and the major partner in Tom Tom Communications, which bought radio station KTOQ in Rapid City, S.D., received $345,000 through the program, the third-largest of the 32 loans granted thus far.

—New York Times, Nov. 15, 1978

Vote as if your life depended on it

■ "I intend to open this country up to democracy," [Brazil's next president, General Joao Baptista Figueiredo] told reporters minutes after being informed of his election. "And anyone who is against that, I will jail, I will crush."

—Washington Post, Nov. 13, 1978

How favorable can you get?

■ Officials said a decisive factor in the [Carter administration's] debate [on increased spending for civil defense] was a Central Intelligence Agency report, released in July, that said the Soviet Union could, under favorable conditions, reduce casualties in a nuclear war "to the low tens of millions."

—New York Times, Nov. 13, 1978

The cops are here; it's time to go to school

■ Police escorted a 13-year-old boy from his bed to Rochester [Minnesota] JHS after he refused parental orders to get up for school. . . . Police said the wakeup service was a one-time phenomenon and will not be offered on a regular basis.

—New York Post, Oct. 29, 1978

Footnote

■ The apparent mass suicide at the Peoples Temple colony in Guyana came a year and a half after temple founder Jim Jones called for the erection of a suicide barrier on the Golden Gate Bridge.

—Los Angeles Times, Nov. 21, 1978

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Behind the GSA scandal

Politics as usual

AS DONALD LAMBRO EXPLAINS IN this issue of *INQUIRY,* the General Services Administration scandal is not just another Washington brouhaha. Rather, to quote Vincent Alto, who headed the internal investigation, it is "the biggest money scandal in the history of the federal government."

The sums involved are staggering: on the order of a quarter of a *billion* dollars lost every year through fraud and waste. Why has Congress ignored the problem for so long, when audits of the GSA have been available for years? Much of the blame must surely lie with the informal collusion between Congress and successive administrations to turn the agency into what Senator Lawton Chiles (D.-Fla.) calls "a graveyard for job seekers with political connections that administrations couldn't put somewhere else."

Corruption at the GSA reached into the highest levels. According to Ronald Kessler of the *Washington Post*, Arthur Sampson, who headed the agency from 1969 to 1975, approved millions of dollars in questionable GSA leases to the Pomponio brothers, developers in Arlington, Virginia. The three brothers, convicted in 1974 of bribery and tax evasion, apparently gave Sampson a block of shares in a new company they were forming, Universal Structures. Sampson is now president of a company owned by Washington developer Laszlo Tauber, who won a $2.5 million-a-year GSA lease from Sampson after receiving inside information on his competitors' bids.

One of Sampson's immediate subordinates, Robert T. Griffin, is also under a cloud. According to Albert Petrillo, a former GSA personnel officer, Griffin asked him to demote William Clinkscales, Jr., the GSA's chief internal investigator, because Clinkscales was "too aggressive in some of his investigations and actions." Petrillo refused the order, resigned, and is now suing the GSA.

It is hard to believe that Griffin, a 35-year veteran of the GSA, knew nothing about the fraud that took millions of additional dollars out of the taxpayers' pockets every year. But Griffin is not an easy man to touch; one of his closest friends and patrons is House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill (D.-Mass.).

More than a year ago, O'Neill pressured President Carter to appoint Griffin to head the GSA. Carter instead hired an outsider, Jay Solomon, who finally decided last July to dismiss Griffin as his deputy. News accounts explained that Solomon felt powerless to make fundamental changes in the GSA as long as Griffin continued to pull the strings from his entrenched position in the bureaucracy.

O'Neill responded angrily to Griffin's ouster, denouncing the "cruel" and "shabby treatment" that Griffin received from the White House as "one of the worst things I have ever seen." Carter, knowing he must defer to the powerful House Speaker or risk defeats on important legislation, acted quickly to heal the rift. Within days he appointed Griffin to the staff of White House trade negotiator Robert Strauss. No one seems to know what Griffin's new job is, although a Carter spokesman explains that his role is "continually expanding" thanks to his "wealth of experience in the federal government."

O'Neill was less than gracious about the matter, at first refusing even to let Carter's congressional lobbyist, Frank Moore, into his office. But Griffin, at least, was pleased. "I'm terribly grateful," he admitted. And so he should be—with a $50,000 a year salary.

O'Neill's protection of Griffin represents only one potential political roadblock facing GSA investigators. Some Washington developers most prominently involved in questionable GSA leases, such as the Charles E. Smith Co., have long cultivated powerful political connections. For example, Senator Abraham Ribicoff (D.-Conn.), who heads the powerful Governmental Affairs Committee, has hundreds of thousands of dollars invested in Smith-sponsored limited partnerships.

Senator Ribicoff may not be guilty of any improprieties. But political relationships like these may explain the apparent impunity with which contractors have fraudulently skimmed millions of dollars off their GSA contracts. No matter how capable and honest are the investigators of the GSA scandal, if they fail to expose and neutralize political efforts to limit the probe, American taxpayers will once again be the losers.

Carter's price is too high

Don't buy SALT

A NEW TREATY ON STRATEGIC-ARMS limitation is almost complete, published reports say, and the Senate debate on SALT will probably begin sometime early in 1979. By all indications, it will be a long and acrimonious one. The halls of Congress will ring with demagogic appeals, the papers will be choked with arcane discussions couched in Strangelovian language, and in the heat of the moment even those Americans who know that SALT won't end the arms race will find it difficult not to join with the Carter administration in defending the agreements against the attacks of the Committee on the Present Danger and other crackpots. Before the debate begins in earnest, those of us

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who oppose the arms race and nuclear weapons need to ask a pertinent question that would otherwise be neglected: Is a SALT agreement worth the price we will have to pay for it?

This question needs asking because in the last several months it has become clear that the Carter administration intends to win ratification of SALT by giving congressional and Pentagon hawks almost everything on their wish lists. During the debate over the Panama Canal treaties, Carter traded pork-barrel projects for votes; but for the SALT debate the chips are nuclear warheads and weapons systems. Consider the following administration decisions:

- In July the White House agreed that it would ask Congress for improved air defenses and a new medium-range bomber for the air force. This move was taken to win the support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a new SALT agreement. Although the administration has not yet submitted its request, reports indicate that Carter will ask for new squadrons of F-15 interceptors, costing $10 billion over several years, and a modern version of the FB-111 fighter-bomber, a plane similar to the Soviet Backfire bomber.
- During the summer the administration also revealed that the SALT accord would not prevent the United States from developing and deploying a new mobile missile [*INQUIRY*, Aug. 21, 1978]. And last month the *New York Times* reported that in January, Carter would submit a request for a $2.2 billion supplemental defense appropriation that will provide up to $500 million for full-scale development of the MX, a new land-based missile, and the Trident 2, an improved version of the Trident submarine-launched missile. According to the *Times*, the request is intended "to lay the political groundwork for achieving Senate approval" for SALT.
- In October Carter approved a new civil defense program that will cost up to $2 billion during the next five years. This program was opposed by the State Department and arms-control officials, but ardent hawks have long demanded that the United States match Soviet efforts.
- In the same month Carter also announced that the United States would manufacture some of the components of the neutron warhead. Carter says he has made no decision yet about whether to deploy the weapon, but the list of nuclear weapons that have been manufactured but not deployed will fit on the head of a pin.

If that were all, it would have been bad enough—but there is more. In October, Paul Warnke, bête noire of the hawks, resigned as SALT negotiator and head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. To replace him at ACDA Carter appointed a retired military man, Lieutenant General George M. Seignious. As it happens, until three days before the White House announced his appointment, Seignious belonged to the American Security Council's Coalition for Peace Through Strength, an anti-SALT group that says the United States has just gone through a "decade of unilateral disarmament." Seignious says he didn't know the group's position on SALT.

The timing and substance of Carter's actions leave little doubt that he's wooing the hawks ardently. It's hardly an accident that his new program matches almost point by point the recommendations for strategic improvements that the Committee on the Present Danger issued in October. Nor does one have to be an utter cynic to know why the administration is publicly flirting with the idea of deploying the new MX (the "X" is for "expensive") on wide-bodied aircraft: the leading opponent of SALT is Henry Jackson, the senator from Boeing. And the end is not in sight. When the treaty reaches the Senate, Carter will have to hand out more concessions, a missile here, a fighter there. Every wavering senator will find the administration immediately at his beck and call, and Carter, having committed his prestige to getting SALT ratified, will trade the substance of increased arms spending for the semblance of arms control.

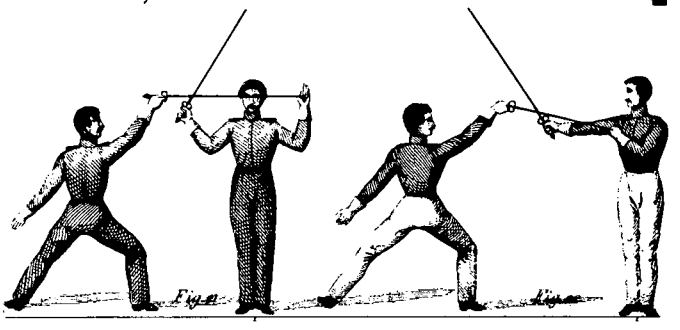
The media, having elevated this kind of log-rolling into statesmanship, will make Carter "man of the year" if he wins ratification, but dedicated opponents of nuclear weapons will know better. If Carter uses these new weapons systems to buy a SALT agreement, we will enter a new and even more dangerous era of the arms race. We have detailed, in a previous issue, the destabilizing effect of the MX. And because the SALT accord will contain no prohibitions on testing, or on research and development, both the United States and the Soviet Union will be able to replace existing weapons with systems even more accurate and destructive. Whatever its merits—and they are few—SALT will not stop the arms race.

In this debate the administration and the Committee on the Present Danger are not very far apart. All that is at issue between them is the level of strategic readiness that is adequate to enable the United States to maintain the far-flung outposts American leaders have staked out during the last three decades. Neither side is interested in reducing American commitments around the globe; neither is willing to lower the risk of war if that were to mean collapsing the nuclear umbrella we now hold over our allies in Europe and Asia. What political or moral victory would antiwar forces derive from helping one set of cold warriors, the Carter administration, turn back the paranoid ravings of their more demented kin? Should antiwar groups support SALT? The answer is obvious.

The Senate debate over SALT gives the opponents of nuclear war a unique opportunity to expand the public dialogue on defense issues. The ratification process will put the spotlight on matters normally concealed from public view. Instead of lending support to SALT, antiwar forces should use the occasion to explain why bilateral arms-control negotiations have failed to limit the arms race. And they should be ready with alternatives to the present foreign-policy consensus.

That means, at a minimum, promoting various unilateral American initiatives to slow the arms race, such as ending testing or cutting back on land-based missiles. It also means trying to make the concept of "minimum deterrence" (enough is enough) part of the dialogue on arms control.

We don't expect, in the short run, that these alternatives will win much acceptance. In the present political climate, the most we can hope for is that they attain a certain public respectability. But that would be a far greater accomplishment than any that might come from putting our moral stamp on a President and a SALT accord that will prolong and intensify the arms race.



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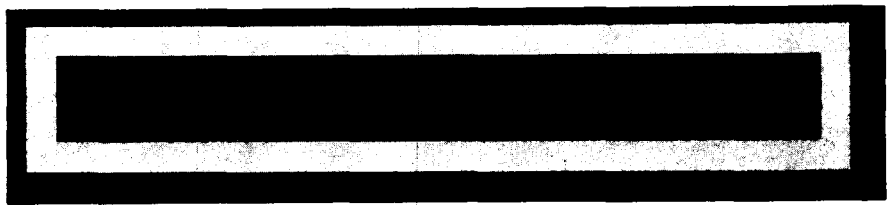

THOMAS SZASZ

The devil's fool

NOT SURPRISINGLY, MOST victims of involuntary mental hospitalization are poor and powerless. However, prominent persons also manage to get committed. Why? Because "madness" often relieves people of guilt and responsibility, thus "freeing" them of the burden of having to conduct themselves competently, day in and day out.

Shadowland, by William Arnold (McGraw-Hill, 260 pp., $9.95), is the story of Frances Farmer's life, especially those parts of it that concern her encounters with psychiatry. Seemingly sharing the public's ignorance of how popular an American pastime it is to commit one's loved ones, Arnold writes as if Frances Farmer's case were unusual. Compassionate toward his subject, he even suggests that Farmer was not mad but the victim of a political conspiracy, an interpretation that prompted the *Kirkus Reviews* to dismiss the book with this revealing sentence: "All the outrage against injured innocence can't cover the stench of paranoia." Nevertheless, Arnold succeeds in conveying the choreography of the *danse macabre* we call "schizophrenia-and-its-treatment" far better than do most writers on this subject, whether professionals or laymen.

Before Frances Farmer was born, her father, a passive individual, separated from his wife Lillian. A woman more than six feet tall, with strong views on everything, Lillian had campaigned for good nutrition and against Communism. In 1931, in her junior year in high school, Frances, a bright girl, wrote an essay called "God Dies," which her teacher entered in a national competition. "I wondered a little," wrote Frances, pondering the "injustices" of the world, "why God was such a useless thing. It seemed a waste of time to have Him." The essay won first prize and created a furor.

Farmer enrolled as a drama major at the University of Washington in 1935. She promptly won another contest, this one sponsored by Seattle's Communist newspaper. The prize was a VIP trip to the Soviet Union. On her return she declared: "My sympathy and support are all for Russia."

Returning to Seattle a year after leaving the university, she went out of her way to insult the dignitaries who feted her. "When one right-wing Congressman introduced himself at the reception [for her]," Arnold writes, "she called him a 'hypocrite' and calmly walked away."

FRANCES FARMER THUS emerged from adolescence possessing a dangerous mixture of personal qualities: she was beautiful and brainy, but she was also arrogant and conceited. She exemplified the sort of person about whom it is said that she loves mankind and hates people. As a result, all her human relationships soured, quickly; everyone and everything disappointed her.

Because her assets as an actress were more readily apparent than her liabilities as a person, her career was a series of quick successes that led nowhere. Within a year of her Soviet tour she was a Hollywood star.

After two years in Hollywood, she was fed up. She could "see nothing but shallowness and deceit." Again she began to speak out for left-wing causes. In 1937, she left for Broadway. Another quick success. Then an affair with a famous director, which, like her earlier marriage, soon broke up. Embracing "worthy" left-wing causes but rejecting individuals as unworthy, Farmer became increasingly isolated and lonely. She took to amphetamines and alcohol.

Frances Farmer's career was now visibly disintegrating. But her arrogance and nastiness knew no bounds. In an argument, she knocked a studio hairdresser down, dislocating her jaw. The woman filed charges. When the police discovered that Farmer had not paid an earlier fine for a drunken driving arrest, they went to her hotel. She tried, clumsily, to flee. Taken to the Santa Monica jail, she gave her occupation, in Arnold's words, "as such an unorthodox one (presumably 'cocksucker') that it caused the police booking officer to jump when he read it." Arraigned in court, this is how she dealt with the judge:

Judge: Have you driven a car since you were placed on probation?
Farmer: No, I haven't, but only because I couldn't get my hands on one.
Judge: Have you reported to your probation officer as directed?
Farmer: No, I never saw him. Why didn't he show up?
Judge (incredulously): Did you expect him to look you up?
Farmer: I expected him to be around so I could get a look at his face.

Farce? Of course! Folly? That depends on how severely those in power want to punish the person who so deliberately dishonors them. Amid giggling spectators, the judge sentenced Frances Farmer to serve the 180 days of her previously suspended sentence. She then asked to make a phone call. When the matron refused to give permission for it, she knocked her down, flooring another officer in the process. To the booking sergeant she gave her occupation as "vagrant vagabond."

Why did such a hugely successful actress—she made more than a million dollars, after taxes, in the six years prior to her arrest (and first psychiatric commitment)—say that she was a "vagrant vagabond"? Among other reasons, because she had given away all of her money. Every penny of it. To Communist causes, to Spanish Civil War groups, to migrant workers, to members of her own family. As a result, when the long-smoldering hostilities between her and her antagonists—familial, judicial, psychiatric—erupted into open warfare, she was destitute, defenseless. "The madman," as Gilbert Chesterton astutely observed, "is not the man who has lost his reason. The madman is the man who has lost everything except his reason." Frances Farmer had indeed lost, or thrown away, everything except her reason. Such a person is ready, in an imagery Chesterton would have heartily approved of, to make a pact with the Devil. Which Frances Farmer proceeded to do.

THOMAS SZASZ, a contributing editor, writes a monthly column for INQUIRY. His most recent book is The Myth of Psychotherapy.

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I will not give away the rest of the story. Suffice it to say that Frances Farmer spends many years in a mental hospital, is drugged, electroshocked, perhaps even lobotomized (no one seems to know for sure). Her degradation and humiliation at the hands of psychiatrists are well described and fully documented. Finally, she is released, a shell—indeed, a mockery—of her former self.

WHAT SHALL WE MAKE of *Shadowland* as a critique of psychiatry? Aside from several minor "technical" errors (such as calling hydrotherapy "a primitive form of shock treatment"), the book is a moving indictment of mad-doctoring. So what? There have been many such indictments over the past two hundred years—to no avail. That is to be expected. Vested interest, prejudice, and fashion are more powerful molders of opinion than is evidence. But that does not diminish the need to document such depravities.

The main value of Arnold's book lies in letting us see Frances Farmer and the people most responsible for her psychiatric damnation, especially her mother, as human beings. Horrible human beings, but human beings nonetheless. Especially in this respect Arnold's book is vastly superior to the countless contemporary accounts of the commitments of Very Important Persons. Arnold confronts what others who write about psychiatric incarceration avoid. He reveals what others conceal. Perhaps because he is rather naive about both psychiatry and psychiatric criticism, and perhaps because he is an honest man who writes well, his book offers a much better lesson in the anatomy of madness and mad-doctoring than other similar stories.

What, finally, should we think of Frances Farmer? In a letter to William Dean Howells, Mark Twain once called himself "God's fool." That he was: loving, compassionate, considerate—and, above all, humorous. If the Devil has fools, too, Frances Farmer was surely one of them: unloving, arrogant, inconsiderate—and above all, humorless. But this is not the way we are supposed to think about "mental illness" and "mental treatment." Befogged by the vapors of a fake science, our vision of the tragicomedy that is modern psychiatry is obscured. Arnold's book is a shaft of light stabbing through the darkness.

DONALD LAMBRO

The GSA ripoff

*OVER THE PAST HALF-*dozen years the General Accounting Office has saturated Congress with more than two hundred reports on the General Services Administration that exposed widespread abuse of authority, circumvention of the law, mismanagement of tax dollars, flagrant wastefulness and extravagance, and just plain stealing. For reasons no one yet understands, the richly detailed government audits were ignored by Congress until 1978, when a *Washington Post* reporter's perseverance paid off in a string of investigative stories that revealed a level of fraud and mismanagement so pervasive as to astound even the most jaded Washington observers.

An estimated $266 million a year is lost through waste and fraud, according to the officially released estimate, but, privately, GAO auditors say the actual total is somewhere closer to half a billion dollars annually. In terms of cold hard cash this is the biggest money scandal in the history of the United States government.

"We were created by Congress to be its watchdog on the bureaucracy," a GAO investigator confided to a reporter, "and believe me if any single agency has been watched more closely than any other, it is the GSA. Incompetent and shady leasing practices, downright shoddy construction oversight, excessive sole-source contracting, the mess in the Federal Supply Service with the self-service stores, you name it and there has been a report laying bare what has been going on. But who has been reading them? Who has been paying attention? Not the Congress, that's for sure. The corruption has been there for years and the Congress has turned the other way."

It wasn't until *Post* reporter Ronald Kessler, who has been covering the GSA since 1970, began hitting pay dirt earlier this year, that the full dimensions of the story began to come into focus. It was Kessler's articles, in fact, that were largely responsible for sparking an investigation into the GSA by the Senate Federal Spending Practices Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Lawton Chiles (D.-Fla.). Those hearings turned GSA into a household word synonymous with waste and corruption.

The fallout from the hearings has led to investigations by federal authorities in more than 22 cities, grand juries in half a dozen of them, and the establishment of a government-wide strike force coordinated by the Justice Department to handle all prosecutions. A total of 30 federal employees and private contractors have been indicted in Baltimore and Washington, 20 of them pleading guilty to defrauding the government. Major additional indictments are expected in the months ahead, perhaps more than 50 in the Washington area alone.

Vincent Alto, who until last month was the GSA's special counsel and chief investigator, was not exaggerating when he told the Chiles subcommittee, "There is a hard core of crooks within GSA and they must be rooted out." But cleansing the bureaucracy-encrusted agency remains a challenging task for GSA Administrator Jay Solomon, the Chattanooga, Tennessee, real estate developer who got his job by being an early campaign supporter of Jimmy Carter and one of his chief Southern fund raisers.

Under Alto—and now under the leadership of Irwin M. Borowski, who in his previous job in the Securities and Exchange Commission's enforcement division was responsible for uncovering the bribes paid by U.S. corporations to foreign governments—the investigators have been finding that the GSA's history of corruption goes back farther than they ever imagined. At least to the Kennedy administration and most likely beyond. And it has gone undisturbed, primarily because members of Congress are unconcerned about what goes on in the agency so long as their states and districts get government office buildings, lucrative long-term leases, and big multimillion dollar purchasing contracts.

Meanwhile, employees of the $5 billion-a-year building, leasing, and supply agency were paying contractors

DONALD LAMBRO is a Washington reporter for United Press International and the author of The Federal Rathole.

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for work never done and goods never received. Supply service personnel were lifting merchandise right off the shelves and carting it home. Others were charging thousands of dollars in goods on GSA-issued credit cards for personal use or for private resale. Cronies of GSA officials were getting leasing contracts without competitive bidding. And hundreds of millions of dollars in office furniture business went to a firm in Newark, New Jersey, Art Metal-USA, despite widespread complaints that its products were poorly constructed, sometimes failing to meet government specifications. Architectural firms who sat on regional GSA advisory panels, entrusted with screening the best applicants for major building design-engineering contracts, often ended up being picked by their colleagues on the panel. The list goes on and on.

Yet despite all this, GAO auditors and GSA's hired guns agree that few of the agency's multitude of bureaucratic travesties can hold a candle to the leasing scandal that only recently has begun to unfold. In terms of sheer business incompetence, gross mismanagement of public funds, and perhaps a healthy measure of personal reward for friends and associates, this chapter in the GSA's shabby history ranks with the worst.

THE GSA LEASES ABOUT 91.3 million square feet of space throughout the country at an annual rent of $455 million. Not only are the leases usually quite profitable for the owners of these buildings, frequently yielding more than the private sector would pay, but also their value as future properties is increasing because the government is shelling out $36 million a year to refurbish and improve them. At times the GSA has paid out more in rent and improvements than the buildings are worth. In other cases the GSA has paid millions of dollars in rent for space the government didn't occupy.

In 1976 the GSA leased an entire office building in Rockville, Maryland, as a laboratory facility for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. The 10-year lease, beginning July 1, 1976, set the yearly rent at $209,335 for 41,867 square feet of space. Shortly thereafter, substantial alterations were made in the building in order to turn the interior into the laboratory facility the agency required. These changes cost the GSA $2.15 million and required almost two years to complete, during which time the building was unoccupied. Now, it is standard practice in government lease contracts to have a clause that states the rental period will not begin until the building is ready to be occupied. This clause was mysteriously dropped from the lease, and throughout the nearly two years that work proceeded on the interior, the GSA paid rent on an unoccupied building.

The total cost of the refurbishing, plus the rent, came to $2.55 million, about $61 per square foot. The appraised value of the entire building when leased was $1.57 million, or $37.50 per square foot. Obviously, it would have been far cheaper if the government had just built the laboratory facility it needed.

The Rockville building is not an isolated instance. Government files are bulging with similar cases, leading the GAO to suggest that "closer scrutiny" be given to plans for alterations to leased buildings because "they (1) may increase the value of the leased buildings which the government does not own and (2) weaken the agency's negotiating position for follow-on leases."

Further compounding the practice of spending tens of millions of dollars improving private buildings is the fact that the GSA has allowed the owners of these buildings to contract for the work done and has then simply picked up the bill. With little or no competitive bidding on alteration work, the GSA has been getting stuck with unnecessarily costly repairs and improvements, which could have been done for a great deal less if they had been negotiated through an approved bidding process.

Investigators are just getting around to discovering what the GSA has been paying for in these alteration contracts. In one case last year involving a building in San Francisco, the landlord not only billed the GSA $131,814 for art work he had installed on his premises, but also added an $11,000 commission for buying it.

In fiscal year 1977, the GSA spent about $19 million out of its rental-of-space budget to make lump sum payments for repairs and alterations in its leased buildings. In addition to the fact that the GSA had no authority to reprogram funds earmarked for leasing, auditors also discovered that the GSA used much of this money simply to get rid of surplus funds at the end of the fiscal year. Having money left over at the end of the fiscal year is tantamount to failure in the federal government. Congressional committees take a dim view of an agency that dares to ask for a budget increase while a surplus is recorded on its books.

Thus, in a memorandum to one of his regional administrators in April 1977, the commissioner of the Public Building Service wrote: "After reviewing your Repair and Alterations Program, I note that you have a projected unobligated balance of $6,817,900 as of March 31, 1977. I am concerned over the possibility that the funds for projects that you have scheduled for the remainder of the current year may not be obligated. I will be monitoring this situation closely and I may consider reprogramming funds to a region which can obligate the funds this fiscal year."

The regions quickly responded to the threat of having their funds taken away from them, and spending sharply increased by September of 1977, the final month of the fiscal year. In one region, for example, spending on alterations more than doubled—from a monthly average of $4.4 million to $9.3 million in September.

IN ADDITION TO THE GSA'S numerous leasing abuses, the agency's history abounds with instances of buying buildings and other properties for which no earthly use can be found. Of these, a building in Laguna Niguel, California, is a classic example.

The GSA, against all advice, in 1974 acquired a building owned by the Rockwell International Corporation, in exchange for government-owned defense facilities at El Segundo and Canoga Park, California, which were appraised at $19.5 million. The Rockwell building was appraised at $20 million. It looks like a good deal, except for the fact that the Rockwell building is 20 miles from the nearest community.

Studies by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Environmental Protection Agency recommended against acquiring the building. Members of Congress similarly warned that it would be a white elephant. Rockwell had tried to sell the building on the private market but without success. For reasons known only to him, then GSA Administrator Arthur Sampson gave the order to make the trade.

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Today this monstrous building, containing one million square feet of space, remains 75 percent vacant. Furthermore, it seems that, dollar for dollar, Rockwell got the better end of the deal. For after the exchange was signed and sealed, Rockwell conducted an independent appraisal of the government properties it acquired and found their true value to be more than $27.3 million, $7.78 million over the government's 1972 estimate. The GSA had been taken.

It wasn't the first time, and it won't be the last. For the GSA landscape is littered with similar horror stories. Expensive IBM typewriters can be found on most desks throughout the bureaucracy, when other name brand electric typewriters can be obtained at far less cost. Low-level managers insist on having their offices furnished with solid wood desks and other expensive furnishings, when cheaper metal desks would suffice. GSA warehouses around the country are packed with office furniture inventory and other supplies that have been sitting in their cartons for several years, unwanted by any agency. While the unused merchandise gathers dust on warehouse floors, railroad cars wait in line to unload millions of dollars in newer furniture and office accessories—all in the latest styles and colors, of course.

To this day, no one in any position of authority can explain how the federal government can spend a quarter of a billion dollars each and every year solely on furniture.

During a tour of a massive GSA warehouse near Baltimore, a reporter was told by one official, "You'd think by now that there would be enough desks and chairs and credenzas and carpets for everyone in the government, but it never ends. Sooner or later they get tired of the old furniture and want the newer styles. Our business really picks up during the change in administrations when the new people want the old furniture and carpets thrown out. Often there's nothing wrong with the furnishings. They must just object to the color scheme."

The GSA warehouses also do a brisk business during the last three months of each fiscal year. "There's nothing mysterious about that," laughed one warehouse officer, "that's year end buying"—another name for the practice of jettisoning unobligated funds before the new fiscal year begins.

In reality, however, everything about the GSA appears mysterious.

BRUCE MCGILLIVRAY

How could an agency of such size and wealth go for so long without congressional scrutiny? How could previous administrators consistently overlook such practices? Why were all the warnings contained in hundreds of GAO audits ignored for so long?

UNDER JAY SOLOMON, the atmosphere at the GSA seems to have improved noticeably in many branches of the agency. Procurement practices have been tightened and centralized. Sole-source contracting is now expected to be the exception rather than the rule. Those close to Solomon, and there are few, say that many key GSA officials suspected of wrongdoing remain in the agency because under civil service procedures they can't be fired without cause. Several dozen lesser officials have been moved to other regions or jobs where they have little authority, but the cleansing of the GSA is still nowhere near complete. Justice Department officials still speak guardedly about "pockets of corruption here and there." The struggle to clean out those pockets may be a bloody one, indeed.

In an interview shortly before he retired as chief investigator, Alto recalled meeting with the man Solomon recruited to clean up the Federal Supply Service. "I told him that he couldn't go in there alone," Alto said. "They're like sharks. They'll eat you alive. You have to move in with a squad of men—which he's doing—men he has handpicked from the outside." Said another top official recruited, also from the outside, by Solomon, "You wouldn't believe what has been going on in here. They're into everything. You name it. Rigged bidding. Phony specifications. Awarding contracts to friends. Payoffs."

From his majestic, Tudor-style, dark wood paneled office, which looks like a set out of *Citizen Kane,* Solomon promises that heads will roll and that top former GSA officials will not be spared. Later, an aide sitting nearby recalls in a hushed voice that history was made on this very spot: he points through an open doorway to an adjoining office, "That's where the Teapot Dome scandal was reputedly plotted. In that very room." In 1922, the Interior Department occupied the building, and Secretary Albert Fall awarded some naval oil reserve leases at Teapot Dome, Wyoming, and Elk Hills, California, to his friends. Though it rocked President Harding's administration, in comparison to the larceny at the GSA today, it was very small indeed. Some employees of the General Services Administration, in still secret testimony, say that major chunks of the GSA scandal were also plotted in that very room. ◻

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DAVID OSBORNE

The Democrats' chameleon politics

IN A POPULAR TELEVISION spot this fall, Michigan viewers saw herds of zebras and ostriches thundering madly across their screens. While the animals raced for cover, a Republican narrator accused the Democrats of running from the tax issue. "Just because they're shy is no reason for us to be shy," he told the audience. "Maybe we should help them disappear."

The ads were amusing, but they missed their mark. To the great surprise of the Republicans, the Democrats did not run from the tax issue this fall. And when the votes were counted on election night, they had not disappeared; they had simply changed their stripes.

Changing stripes was what the Democratic campaigns were all about this year. Candidate after candidate, leery of the tax revolt afoot in middle America, stripped off the garb of the big-spending liberal and donned the robes of fiscal conservatism. In California, cradle of the revolt, one would have thought from the campaign rhetoric that the state had never seen, much less elected, any liberal Democrats. Jerry Brown, the grand master of chameleon politics, romped to reelection with the help of a 30-second TV encomium from Howard Jarvis, godfather of Proposition 13—his leading antagonist on the issue before June 6. And so many Democrats offered tax-cut plans above and beyond Proposition 13 that GOP gubernatorial candidate Evelle Younger, seemingly dazed by the whole thing, had to admit the Republicans were "pretty much spectators."

The same story was repeated all across America. Rarely mentioning the usual liberal issues, such as education, jobs, or aid to the cities, Democrats talked tax and budget cuts. Many of them even called for a balanced federal budget—an idea liberals scoffed at just a year ago. Senatorial and gubernatorial candidates in major states like Massachusetts, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Minnesota attacked their Republican opponents for being too *liberal* on fiscal issues. And in the strangest twist of all, New Hampshire's arch-conservative Governor Meldrim Thomson—long considered invulnerable because of his consistent pledge to veto any sales or income tax—was defeated by Democrat Hugh Gallen, who successfully labeled him a taxer.

This plagiarism of traditional GOP issues drove the Republicans, as National Chairman Bill Brock put it, "up a wall." And it worked. Although the GOP began a modest comeback and liberal Democrats suffered setbacks in the Senate, the ruling party staved off major losses. And that is no mean feat in an off year, running against a conservative tide.

The Democratic campaigns during 1978 may be just the first act of a larger drama, the stuff of which history is made. For in saving their skins in the short run, the Democrats have taken a new turn for the first time since Franklin Roosevelt launched his New Deal. The party that has for 40 years promised a better life through government action and social spending has changed its tack. And if the campaign rhetoric is reflected in action, those who have always relied on that spending are about to be set adrift. For four decades social spending and "big government" bound the party's disparate constituencies—north and south, black and white, rich and poor, working and middle class—together. But no longer.

Anyone who doubts that Congress and the Carter administration intend to fulfill their promises to trim spending has only to look at the cuts enacted before the election and those planned for the fiscal 1980 budget. "The reason Black America is in real difficulty today," says Representative Shirley Chisholm (D.-N.Y.), "is that the alliances we have had with liberal and moderate white legislators are no longer there. They are responding to the Proposition 13 fever sweeping the land, and as a result, we find ourselves isolated in the battles we're now fighting.

"I think those of us who are truthful about the matter and can be objective about it already see it: The old labor, black, liberal coalition that we depended upon for so long is coming apart at the seams. There is going to be a realignment of forces in our Democratic Party."

Just what form that realignment will take is not clear. But the key question is clear: how those who are directly affected by the coming cutbacks will react. Will they suffer in silence, or will they rebel? So far there has been a lot of noise from labor and black leaders, but little action. The conservative tide may well prove too strong for them. Yet the basis for a real ideological fight—the kind that can eventually split a party—is now apparent. And the scenario is already being scripted at the state level.

Take Massachusetts. There Democratic Governor Michael Dukakis staked out ground very similar to the terrain that President Carter is trying to hold: socially liberal but fiscally conservative. However, in four short years this ground crumbled beneath Dukakis, and the party is bitterly split.

Elected in 1974 as a liberal champion, Dukakis was caught early in his term by a fiscal crisis that threatened to bankrupt the state. Having run on an ironclad promise not to raise taxes, he instead clamped down hard on salaries of state employees and took a "meat cleaver"—his words—to social programs. Furious, public employees distributed thousands of "Dump the Duke" bumper stickers and flooded the polls on primary day. Likewise disgruntled, the party's liberals ran a former mayor of Cambridge, Barbara Ackerman, against him in the primary. "I thought it was a luxury," explained Jerome Grossman, the state's leading liberal fund-raiser, "a way of sending a message so that when Dukakis put together the policies of his second term, he would know there was a body of disaffected people out there."

Having alienated the Democratic left—thus depriving his campaign of the enthusiastic army of volunteers that had helped him in 1974—Dukakis refused to follow step two of the Jerry Brown formula: embrace the right. As in California, the big issue this year in Massachusetts was property taxes. And because he had been forced in the end to break his promise not to raise

DAVID OSBORNE is East Coast editor for Pacific News Service.

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taxes, Dukakis was already in hot water.

HIS ANSWER WAS TO provide indirect property-tax relief by distributing the state surplus of $250 million to cities and towns. But he refused to do more, even vetoing a "circuit breaker" tax relief bill for low- and middle-income homeowners pushed through the legislature by the populist organization, Massachusetts Fair Share. Meanwhile he blithely assured the press that the voters in Massachusetts were "too smart" to go for something like Proposition 13.

Ed King knew better. Only days after the California results came in, King, who favors the death penalty and opposes abortion, appointed himself Massachusetts' answer to Proposition 13. He built his whole campaign around deep property-tax cuts. Seasoned observers say Dukakis, with a little skilled campaigning, could have beaten King anyway, and they are probably right. But King eventually walloped Dukakis in the primary, outpolling the governor by 8.5 percent, with 7 percent to Ackerman. Alienating the left by his fiscal conservatism but failing to reach out to the right on taxes, Dukakis taught Democrats around the nation an important lesson: in 1978 the middle is soft.

Massachusetts Democrats woke up to find their party, in the words of liberal state legislator Barney Frank, "in about the same shape as the Holy Roman Empire—a shambles." When King followed his primary win with a victory on November 7, the pundits and politicians began predicting intraparty war. After a primary campaign in which, as one of his aides described it, "we put all the hate groups into one pot and let it boil," King is not loved by liberal and black politicians, many of whom endorsed his moderate Republican opponent. He was booed at liberal rallies, snubbed by state party leaders like Ted Kennedy, and was denied the endorsements of Dukakis and Boston's Democratic Mayor Kevin White. Yet King refused to bend, and he is now in a position of great strength, beholden to few of the party regulars.

Paradoxically, the liberal wing of the party could hardly be stronger. It elected a full-blooded ADA liberal, Paul Tsongas, to the Senate. And it won a smashing, unexpected victory of more than two to one on the most important issue on the ballot, a measure to allow cities to continue taxing business at higher rates than homes—thus staving off the effects of a recent court decision. The coalition behind this "classification amendment" was broad, starting with Massachusetts Fair Share and including all of labor, many church groups, supporters of aid to the elderly, the Massachusetts Mayors Association, and even the VFW and American Legion. Next year's goal will be more far-reaching property-tax reform. With such a strong liberal coalition working in the same arena as King, who has promised to cut property taxes by $500 million simply by budget trimming, everyone expects sparks to fly.

As Democrats elsewhere discovered, Massachusetts is not unique. In neighboring Connecticut, where Democratic Governor Ella Grasso imposed harsh budget cuts similar to those mandated by Dukakis, a liberal rebellion also broke out. Lieutenant Governor Robert Killian broke ranks during the summer and ran against Grasso in the primary, suggesting an income tax to provide property-tax relief and more funds for education, social programs, and urban aid. After Grasso used that idea to bury him, unhappy liberal and labor leaders fell back into line. But the tensions that created the rift have not gone away.

In Minnesota the Democratic-Farmer-Labor (DFL) party suffered perhaps the worst split this fall after conservative millionaire Robert Short defeated liberal favorite Representative Don Fraser in the primary race for Hubert Humphrey's old seat. Feelings ran so high that the DFL refused to endorse Short, leaving his name off the 900,000 sample ballots it distributed around the state. And the bitterness only deepened after the party lost both its Senate seats and the governorship in a stunning defeat on November 7, reversing decades of liberal dominance.

Virginia, hardly a liberal Democratic bastion, likewise saw its party splintered between liberal and moderate wings in this year's election. And if California's Democratic party were a more viable political organization and if the state's labor leaders had been less conservative, even consummate media star Jerry Brown might have had trouble. His fiercest critics this fall were on the left, including the ADA. And next year, when the budget surplus runs out and the delayed Proposition 13 crunch hits, his seat will undoubtedly get hotter.

SPLITS AT THE STATE LEVEL do not automatically mean the same splits will surface at the national level, however. Jimmy Carter just might succeed in remolding the party of the New Deal, Fair Deal, and Great Society into a centrist, fiscally conservative coalition anchored at widely removed ideological poles. The point is not that an intraparty struggle is about to break out, but that the basis for such a development now exists.

Whether a split occurs depends on many factors: how deep the budget cuts go, how much momentum the resurgent right maintains, how Carter and Congress respond to the next recession, and how badly the old New Deal constituencies are hurt in the process. But most of all, it depends on the liberals themselves—the black politicians, the labor leaders, the big-city mayors, the few remaining old-line liberal spokesmen like Edward Kennedy. Unless that contingent decides to counterattack, Carter and the moderate Democrats are safe. And though some black and labor leaders are talking rebellion, their ability to pull it off is open to serious question. The problems they face are enormous.

Take blacks, for example. Although Representative John Conyers (D.-Mich.) and other black leaders threaten to abandon Carter in 1980, a top Conyers aide explains why the threats are as yet a bit empty: "You have no activism in the black community."

Labor leaders have a bit more to work with, but not much. And they have been louder. After labor-law reform was defeated last summer, United Auto Workers President Douglas Fraser, furious over what he called the resumption of "class war" by business, made big waves by resigning from the elite presidential advisory Labor-Management Group, a symbol of the business-labor alliance once so important to the Democrats. Machinists Union President Bill Winpisinger later broke off support for Carter and all Democrats who voted for the natural gas bill, and even began musing about the possible need for a third party.

The most important break came in October, when Fraser convened an array of labor and liberal groups to forge an alliance bent on recapturing the party. Worried about the momentum of the right and angry with Carter

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and many Democrats in Congress for abandoning their platform commitments, the participants talked of building a new grassroots movement on the left. But genuine movements grow upward from citizens angry about issues, not downward from coalitions of established organizations. And the October 17 meeting revealed what is perhaps the liberals' biggest problem: They have no new ideas to promote, no program around which to organize, no coherent ideology that offers hope of real solutions to America's problems. Speaker after speaker pointed this out—Fraser confessing that the right was not only "outworking, outhustling, and outspending us, but [also] . . . beginning to outthink us"; Representative Ron Dellums (D.-Cal.) repeatedly urging the delegates to "emerge with a new ideology," though never proposing one.

What they were saying, without spelling it out, was that New Deal liberalism is dead, the victim of a new economic era. That fact is at the heart of their dilemma. No longer can liberal Democrats rely on an expanding economy to guarantee jobs and rising wages for labor without alienating business. No longer can they tax middle-income families but go light on business and the wealthy, to provide help for the poor. No longer can they buy both guns and butter. With inflation stopping real-wage gains and relentlessly increasing the burden on middle-income taxpayers, the old solutions—all of which boiled down to big spending—no longer wash. When Fraser said, "We have to find new and fresh solutions—not those we offered in the forties, the fifties, the sixties, and the seventies," he was not spouting rhetoric.

For the liberal Democrats the situation is urgent because their opponents on the right *do* have a salable ideology that promises fresh solutions. When conservatives argue that Washington is overtaxing, overregulating, and overspending, people listen. Even many Democrats have bought a piece of that argument, and the liberals' Achilles heel is their failure to come up with a counter. Instead they are stuck defending government programs that are widely perceived as riddled with waste and far too expensive for their meager results — when they are not seen as outright failures.

To get back on the offensive, many of those at the UAW-sponsored meeting agreed they must first get out in front on the tax issue. This means developing alternatives to Proposition 13 that offer significant tax relief to middle-income families without destroying social services. The hitch here is obvious though: If you cut the taxes of middle-income families, how do you make up the difference? There is ritual talk of slashing the defense budget, but most liberals understand that to be outside the realm of possibility for now. The Coalition of American Public Employees, the political arm of five public-sector unions, says it will push at the state level to raise income taxes on the wealthy and to make business pay its "fair share." But in an era when most cities and states are competing for industry by offering huge tax breaks, the group will need a real change in political climate to win.

Yet the liberals continue to hope. They say there is an ill-defined populist strain underlying the tax revolt, an anger not only at big government but at big business and every other institution seen to be responsible for the nation's troubles. They also point to the most detailed poll done on taxes this year, by Burns Roper, which showed more anger at government waste and a perceived unfairness in the distribution of the tax burden, than at the level of taxes. Indeed, the election results show that when it comes to candidates, voters appear ready to follow almost anyone—of whatever stripe—who promises decisive action and hope of real solutions. Nothing else explains the puzzling fact that Ted Kennedy remains the most popular presidential candidate in the land.

Kennedy, in fact, is the one man who could almost instantly put the liberals back on the offensive, simply by announcing his candidacy. Should the economy slide into recession next year —and should Carter fail to respond with the traditional Democratic panaceas of public works and aid to cities—the pressures on Kennedy will build.

For the moment, though, Carter and the moderates are clearly in control. As the 1978 elections fade into memory, the contradictions at the heart of the Democratic Party have begun to appear, but only just. The basis for a party split is emerging, but not the split itself. It bears close watching, however, for as the historians are fond of telling us, the American party system goes through a regular realignment every thirty to forty years, and it is now overdue. ❑

PAUL HOCH & JONATHAN MARSHALL

JFK: The unsolved murder

*FOR 17 DAYS IN SEP-*tember 1978, nearly 15 years after the fact, the House Select Committee on Assassinations held public hearings into the death of John F. Kennedy. Long embroiled in controversy over the size of its budget requests and the flamboyance of its leadership, the committee with its new chief counsel, Robert Blakey, has gone to great lengths to avoid such criticism. The hearings were as much an attempt to justify its own long existence as an effort to disclose the main lines of its investigation. In the long run, the real importance of the hearings may lie in the fact that they were held at all; they substantiated the long-standing claim of assassination buffs that the American people deserved to know more about the case than the Warren Commission told us.

Although the hearings were only a partial preview of the forthcoming final report, they provide insights into the committee's thinking and suggest guidelines for evaluating that report. Barring last-minute developments, we can expect the committee to conclude that Kennedy was hit by two shots from the rear, that the Warren Commission and the intelligence agencies did not carry out a thorough investigation, and that a conspiracy involving Lee Harvey Oswald or Jack Ruby with anti-Castro Cubans or underworld figures cannot be decisively ruled out.

Although it kept the conspiracy op-

PAUL HOCH, co-editor of The Assassinations: Dallas and Beyond, *attended the hearings in Washington. JONATHAN MARSHALL is an associate editor of INQUIRY.*

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tion open, the committee appears to favor the Warren Commission's single-gunman hypothesis. The most persuasive evidence against multiple assassins came from medical and photo analysis experts who concluded that the two shots that hit Kennedy did indeed come from the general direction of the "sniper's nest" in the Texas School Book Depository Building, and not from the front as some critics maintained. Through careful analysis of bullet trajectories and of the chemical composition of bullet fragments, the experts supported the Warren Commission's claim that a single bullet could have passed through Kennedy and wounded Connally, even though it emerged relatively unmutilated.

One impressive witness, however, threw doubts on the committee's case for the single-assassin theory. From his examination of a tape recording of the shots fired in Dealey Plaza, Dr. James Barger concluded there was a fifty-fifty chance that a *fourth* shot was fired—a miss from the grassy knoll. Moreover, the timing of two of the shots from the rear—1.6 seconds apart—suggests that a single gunman would have had difficulty firing them fast enough. The committee questioned Dr. Barger closely, probing for weaknesses, but ultimately could not discount his anomalous evidence. The committee's handling of this testimony in its final report will say much about its tolerance of evidence that fails to confirm the lone gunman theory.

Not all the technical evidence was equally impressive. Nevertheless, in comparison with the Warren Commission's shoddy mishandling of such issues and its dependence on FBI experts, the careful work done for the committee now makes it difficult to sustain any theory other than two-hits-from-the-rear without positing massive fraud. The possibility remains that evidence (such as the bullet fragments) was tampered with before the experts saw it, but the critics now must carry a heavier burden of proof.

On the other hand, even with the two-hits-from-the-rear scenario it does not necessarily follow that no shots came from the front, that only one gunman fired from the rear, or, above all, that Oswald himself fired from the sixth floor window. Indeed, the committee added practically nothing to the Warren Commission's questionable circumstantial case against Oswald. The commission failed to prove not only that Oswald actually pulled the trigger, but even that he was a practiced shot, that he carried the rifle into the book depository, or that he was on the sixth floor when the assassination occurred. The alternative to the Warren Commission's case is a carefully coordinated conspiracy to frame Oswald. This may strike the committee's lawyers as unlikely, on the accumulated weight of the evidence. The real question, however, is whether the congressmen seriously pursued the possibility of such a frame-up; or, to put it another way—if such a conspiracy existed, what is the likelihood that the committee would have uncovered it?

The question is not an idle one, since the Warren Commission itself never seriously entertained the possibility of Oswald's innocence. Inasmuch as the commission relied on the FBI as its chief investigative arm, it could hardly have done otherwise. Only two days after the assassination J. Edgar Hoover already sought to put the case to rest. As he told Walter Jenkins in the White House, "The thing I am most concerned about and so is [Deputy Attorney General] Mr. Katzenbach is having something issued so we can convince the public that Oswald is the real assassin."

[J. Edgar Hoover tried and convicted Oswald only days after JFK died.]

That same day—November 24—Alan Belmont, Hoover's assistant, indicated in a memorandum that his agents were at work on a report for the attorney general to "make it clear that Oswald is the man who killed the President." "We will show," he added, "that Oswald was an avowed Marxist, a former defector to the Soviet Union and an active member of the FPCC [Fair Play for Cuba Committee], which has been financed by Castro." Yet the Warren Commission's files provide evidence that Oswald's defection may have been arranged by a U.S. intelligence agency, that he was privately in contact with White Russian and anti-Castro circles, and that he was the *only* member of his FPCC chapter—which certainly looks like a cover. But the FBI had already made up its mind, and the Warren Commission was loath to ask too many questions.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE House committee, at least in its hearings, likewise showed no interest in the possibility of a conspiracy to frame Oswald, as opposed to suggestions that he played a part in a larger plot against Kennedy. It chose instead to call Marina Oswald to the stand to provide a plausible political or psychological motive for his alleged crime.

The committee's decision to call her at all was highly questionable; it knew that even the Warren Commission had doubted her veracity. As commission counsel Norman Redlich put it in a memo of February 28, 1964, "Marina has repeatedly lied to the Secret Service, the FBI, and this Commission on matters which are of vital concern." The committee thus faced a dilemma: either to assault a defenseless widow in full public view, or to let her testimony go unchallenged at the risk of leaving the public misinformed. The congressmen chose the latter option—all the more readily because her testimony as to Oswald's character might not stand up if her general credibility were questioned.

To take but one example, the committee was noticeably silent when Marina told her dubious story of having prevented Oswald from leaving their bathroom, by dint of her superior physical strength, to murder Richard Nixon. (The Warren Commission said her story—originally that she locked him in from the outside—was "of no probative value.")

Despite their efforts, the congressmen could not make Marina say she thought Oswald pulled the trigger; she would admit only that he was capable of the crime. She even recalled that Oswald had expressed admiration for President Kennedy. Her appearance did not add to the committee's luster.

Moving away from Dealey Plaza, the hearings focused on larger issues, including Jack Ruby's extensive ties to organized crime. More than any other issue these ties suggested to the committee the possibility of a conspiracy. The committee uncovered little that surprised informed critics, who long

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ago demolished the Warren Commission's denial of Ruby's underworld dealings. Whatever the committee's conclusions, these particular hearings were revealing as an indication of Blakey's belief in an ongoing organized crime conspiracy that deserves exposure and federal prosecution. Blakey himself fought the mob as an attorney in the Kennedy Justice Department, and the major institutional effect of the hearings may be to revive the Kennedy war against organized crime, whether or not the assassination case is solved.

The committee also failed to explain conclusively the suspicious denial by Soviet defector Yuri Nosenko of any dealings between Oswald and the KGB (*INQUIRY*, June 26, 1978). Its lengthy hearings on the Nosenko case aired some of the CIA's dirty linen—in particular, its gross mistreatment of Nosenko and the divisiveness of the CIA's internal debate over his *bona fides*—but how much was relevant to the assassination inquiry? Richard Helms complained with some justification that some of the testimony was less an attempt to shed light on the murder than to excoriate various CIA officials. In any case, sending a fake defector, even with a fake story, does not implicate the KGB in the assassination any more than the FBI coverup of a note Oswald sent one of its agents implicates that agency in the crime.

For all its interest in Oswald's connection to the Soviets and the Cubans, the committee was surprisingly quiet about the possibility of his ties to U.S. intelligence agencies. In questioning Helms, for example, the congressmen never got around to asking the former CIA director why his Warren Commission testimony that the CIA had never even considered using Oswald as an intelligence source, was contradicted by an internal CIA memo describing in detail precisely such contemplated contacts.

Nor did it pursue Helms's intriguing, and novel, explanation of the CIA's failure to debrief Oswald upon his return from the Soviet Union. Helms suggested that the navy would have had responsibility for interrogating Oswald, a former marine. Many critics have raised the possibility that Oswald, whose background reeks of an intelligence connection, may have worked not for the CIA, but for naval intelligence (ONI). Helms was not asked about this speculation, but the role of the military in planting fake defectors in the Soviet Union in the late 1950s, which a committee source confirms, suggests once again that ONI may have sponsored Oswald's defection without even the full knowledge of the CIA or FBI. Yet the committee hearings made no mention of naval intelligence.

The Warren Commission, we now know, never succeeded in getting full access to military files on Oswald, including the complete records of his security clearance and the "damage assessment" that must have been prepared after his defection. One commission lawyer noted that there had been "noticeable delays" by ONI in its "performance of liaison functions." And the commission's general counsel, J. Lee Rankin, asked for, but never got, files he knew to exist "from organizations other than the Office of Naval Intelligence, such as the Office of Special Investigations of the United States Air Force and from intelligence [agencies] of the Department of the Army."

FBI documents released last year reveal, for the first time, that army intelligence held files on Oswald in at least three southern cities. When these files were requested under the Freedom of Information Act, the army said they could not be found; Jack Anderson and committee sources later learned that the files, which the Warren Commission never saw, had been destroyed some time after the assassination.

THERE ARE GOOD reasons to look further into the role of army intelligence. FBI documents show that within two hours of Oswald's arrest, army intelligence agents in San Antonio learned of Oswald's possession of a card with the alias A. J. Hidell, a fact that no other agency seems to have recognized for 24 hours, save the FBI, which was tipped off by the army. The Hidell alias linked Oswald to the much-disputed assassination rifle, which had been ordered in that name.

The army's immediate intervention raises further questions in view of the fact that the head of a local army intelligence reserve unit helped select, for Marina Oswald's crucial first interview, an interpreter whose translation of her testimony about the rifle has been seriously questioned by some critics. We also know that army intelligence agent James Powell was inside the book depository when the rifle was found, and that several pivotal Dallas police officers were members of the army intelligence reserve. Furthermore, on the tense evening of November 22 the 112th Army Intelligence Group cabled the U.S. Strike Command in Florida the false and highly provocative information that Oswald was a card-carrying communist and a former defector to Cuba.

When asked why the committee ignored Defense agencies in its hearings, a committee staff member would say only that "we are aware of the existence of the Department of Defense." We can only hope that in its final report the committee will indicate the difficulties it had in penetrating the secrets of the intelligence agencies.

Although the committee has publicly dealt with the critics' case against the Warren Commission only imperfectly, its work has clearly been more substantial and thoughtful than most past investigations. But a full appraisal of its job must await the final report expected on December 31. In particular, observers will be watching to see that the committee releases not just its conclusions, but also the bulk of its evidence and executive session transcripts. With the benefit of hindsight, Judge Burt W. Griffin, former assistant counsel to the Warren Commission, specifically called on the committee to declassify "all materials . . . except those whose publication is inconsistent with human decency." Failure to make such disclosure will only provoke new charges of a coverup.

The committee's hearings and extensive investigative work testify to the substantial areas of doubt left open by the Warren Commission. In view of the profound and difficult questions raised by the assassination investigation with regard to the role of intelligence agencies, organized crime, and other covert forces in American politics—regardless of who pulled the trigger—some areas of doubt will inevitably remain. It would be naive to agree with JFK subcommittee chairman Richardson Preyer (D.-N.C.) that when the report is issued the American people will at last be able to say "we understand now how it happened; these are all the facts we'll ever know; we don't know all the facts, but let's put it behind us now." For better or worse, Burt Griffin's conclusion seems more realistic: "The public concern about the assassination of President Kennedy will not end in the lifetime of anyone in this room."

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BURIED ALIVE IN THE USSR

By LUDMILLA THORNE

Aleksandr Ginzburg's passionate defense of human rights has landed him back in a Soviet prison camp—this time for eight years.

"WHAT IS YOUR nationality?" asked the judge. "Prisoner," answered the accused. At age 41 Aleksandr Ginzburg had already spent over eight years in Soviet concentration camps and prisons and he knew that many more years of incarceration lay ahead. When he was arrested 17 months earlier, he was a wiry man with a reddish-brown beard and curly dark hair. Now his hair was white, and he stooped before the court wracked by the pain of a bleeding ulcer.

Last July, the trial of this veteran human rights activist, like that of Anatoly Shcharansky, became a cause célèbre. Every major newspaper of the world carried President Carter's denunciation, Secretary Vance's condemnation, and the Italian Communist Party's sharp attack on the Soviet government "for making dissent a punishable crime." Around the world there were demonstrations, threats to stop trading with the Soviets, and proposals to swap the two prominent dissidents for all sorts of available candidates. But it all ended with Shcharansky being sentenced to 13 years in prison and Ginzburg to eight. Now, only their families and close friends continue to suffer at the thought of the two men's outrageous fate.

For Ginzburg's mother, Ludmilla, and his wife, Irina, such pain is nothing new. In December 1959, Aleksandr—or Alik, as he is known—began editing a typewritten literary journal called *Sintaxis* that carried poems by young Moscow and Leningrad writers, some of whom were not published in the official press. Several contributors, including Bella Akhmadulina, Bulat Okudzhava, and Iosif Brodsky, later became world famous. Two more issues of *Sintaxis* appeared early in 1960, and then its editor was arrested.

Ginzburg spent two years in a labor camp; the Soviet authorities did not consider his journal simply an artistic pursuit. The late 1950s and early 1960s were a time of ferment in Russia. Khrushchev had made his famous de-Stalinization speech, stripping the mustachioed tyrant of his sanctity. The thaw had come, freeing imaginative new streams in literature, music, and art from the tundra of Stalin's time. But Ginzburg obviously went too far for the Soviet authorities.

"Aleksandr Ginzburg was my first

LUDMILLA THORNE, a New York City writer, specializes in Russian subjects. She is executive secretary of Aleksandr Ginzburg's defense committee.

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editor," recalls exile Iosif Brodsky, now a Columbia University teacher whose poetry has been translated into a dozen languages. "He is a man with a fine literary taste and a particular sensitivity to poetry." After Ginzburg's journal was crushed, a number of other similar "underground" publications came into being, such as *Phoenix* and *Sphinxes,* "but it all began with *Sintaxis,*" says Brodsky.

After his release Ginzburg faced many difficulties. He almost didn't receive permission to live in Moscow with his mother, he was not allowed to resume his journalism studies at Moscow University (from which he had been expelled when he was arrested), and he had difficulty finding work. He eventually took on a series of odd jobs, including cleaning sewers.

In less than a year the authorities again focused on Ginzburg. This time his offense was to show to his friends a series of French films on modern artists such as Picasso and Utrillo which he had acquired. The films were confiscated, and *Izvestia* published a derogatory article about him entitled "Dunces Ask to Go to Europe." After that he was a marked man, subject to all sorts of minor harassments; the next major head-on collision with the authorities occurred in 1966.

At that time world public opinion was incensed by the spectacle of the trial of Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel, which culminated in lengthy prison terms for the two Soviet writers who had published their works abroad under pseudonyms. Ginzburg was aroused both by the injustice of the sentence, and by the treatment of the matter in the Soviet press. He decided to collect all of the available materials, to bring to the attention of the Soviet authorities in the hope of reversing the court's verdict. His so-called *White Book*, which contained 150 documents, including articles from the Soviet and Western press, recounted the events of the trial itself and various reactions to it. Ginzburg personally took a copy of the collection to the KGB and to various prominent deputies of the Supreme Soviet. At the same time he sent a letter to Premier Aleksei Kosygin, explaining: "I love Russian literature and do not wish that two more of its representatives be sent under guard to chop wood."

Less than a month after completing the *White Book,* Ginzburg was called into the KGB offices and was warned to stop distributing his collection (there were only 10 typewritten copies!) or face arrest for "spreading deliberate fabrications discrediting the Soviet political system." Ginzburg refused. In the meantime, the *White Book* had already made its way to the West and was published in several countries. In the Soviet Union it was traveling via *samizdat*—from hand to hand, on typewritten sheets. "It awoke us from our moral slumber," recalls a Soviet reader.

Williams volunteered to defend Ginzburg. Visa denied.

In January 1967, the KGB carried out its threat. It arrested Ginzburg along with three other dissidents, including his close friend Yuri Galanskov, the editor of *Phoenix*; and Vera Lashkova, a young woman who had typed both the *White Book* and Galanskov's journal. They were kept in prison for one year before going on trial in January 1968. "The trial of the four," as it became known, was a bizarre courtroom effort to link the four dissidents to a Russian anti-Soviet emigré organization in West Germany.* But the trial backfired, provoking the so-called "signing activity"—the circulation of open protest letters signed by hundreds of Soviet citizens—that is still a hallmark of the human rights movement in the Soviet Union today. The flood of letters protesting the Ginzburg-Galanskov trial were signed by countless prominent Soviet writers, academicians, and of course, fellow dissidents.

During the trial Ginzburg requested only that he not be given a lesser sentence than his friend, Galanskov. The court, of course, refused. Galanskov was given seven years and Ginzburg five. They were sent to the same strict-regime labor camp in Mordovia, where Yuli Daniel was also serving his term. Everything had come full circle. "When I first heard of the book which Aleksandr Ginzburg had compiled about our trial, I immediately thought of this man's generosity and chivalry," wrote Daniel in one of his prison letters. "When I met Alik, I learned that he was precisely such a person."

The three men, Ginzburg, Galanskov, and Daniel, developed a close friendship, the kind that can grow only behind barbed wire. The special loyalty they felt for each other was reflected in Galanskov's joining, despite his acute ulcer, a hunger strike staged by Ginzburg to protest the authorities' prevention of his marriage to his fiancée Irina Zholkovskaya. Grateful as he was for the support, Ginzburg gave up his 26-day hunger strike when he saw his friend's emaciated body and grayish-green face. Finally, in August 1969, on the premises of the camp, they were allowed to marry.

Daniel was released in 1970 and Ginzburg completed his term two years later. But Galanskov did not survive. In November 1972, he died during an emergency operation that was performed by a fellow inmate. Galanskov, too, was a poet; one of his poems ends, "may a raven peck out/a cross/on the marble of my body."

Shortly before his release Aleksandr Ginzburg wrote to his wife: "Understand and accept that I shall never be able to forget those who remain here. I will have to give them all of my strength."

Ginzburg came out of labor camp a very sick man, with ulcers and suffering the effects of malnutrition. He was not allowed to live with his wife but was forced to settle in the district of Kaluga, 100 miles southwest of the capital. And again he faced the problem of finding work; the police made certain that he was fired every time he found a job. He was not even allowed to sew mittens, a skill he had learned in camp. He was forbidden to eat at a local restaurant or to visit the Kaluga "House of Culture." He had an 8 P.M. to 7 A.M. curfew, and had to register regularly with the local police.

WITHIN months Ginzburg met Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Both men had been *zeks*, prisoners—one during Stalin's time and the other, later. Both passionately felt the need to help those who remained imprisoned. Solzhenitsyn was greatly

For more information see The Trial of the Four *(Pavel Litvinov, editor, Viking Press, New York, 1972).*

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impressed by Ginzburg's "unswerving loyalty to the prisoners of the Gulag Archipelago" and by his "quiet courage." The two devised a plan to aid prisoners and their families in the Soviet Union, where charitable organizations do not exist. Solzhenitsyn offered his foreign royalities for this purpose and by 1973 help was on the way.

In 1974, soon after Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the Soviet Union, he founded in Zurich the Russian Social Fund, and named Aleksandr Ginzburg as administrator of its activities in the Soviet Union. Solzhenitsyn has committed all the royalties from *The Gulag Archipelago,* throughout the world and in all languages, to this fund, which now has over two million dollars. He firmly believes that the money made from his book about the camps should all flow back to the countless victims.

For three years Aleksandr Ginzburg worked quietly and effectively, under the ever watchful eye of the KGB: they bugged his home, intercepted his mail, and occasionally raided his apartment. In spite of this harassment, every prisoner's child known to him received 30 rubles a month, and each released prisoner 200 to 300 rubles to help him start a new life. In the words of Natalia Solzhenitsyn, "Aleksandr Ginzburg possessed those rare qualities necessary for performing this difficult and dangerous work: kindness, lack of fear, calmness and an exceptional memory for remembering the number of children in a given family, which little boy was ill and what type of medicine he needed, which little girl required warm clothing, whose wife had no money to send her husband a parcel and who did not have the money to buy a train ticket to visit someone in camp." In the meantime, Ginzburg had to think of his own two little boys in Moscow, Aleksandr and Alexei, from whom he was practically separated.

On February 2, 1977, Ginzburg disclosed to a group of Western correspondents that he had spent the equivalent of $360,000 on 1470 political prisoners and their families, of all nationalities, religions, and backgrounds. He also pointed out that 70,000 rubles, or $93,000, of the total had been contributed by Soviet citizens, who gave what they could afford: sometimes as little as three or five rubles. The informal press conference at the Ginzburg apartment in Moscow was prompted by an article that appeared in the writers' union weekly, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, accusing him of illegal currency transactions. Actually, the fund was started with money that the Solzhenitsyn family left behind, and further royalties from *The Gulag Archipelago* were transferred legally, with the Soviet government skimming one-third off in taxes and changing the rest into rubles. Since then, the tax rate has increased.

THE DAY AFTER THE press conference Aleksandr Ginzburg was arrested. In the evening he went out to make a telephone call (the family's own phone had been cut off by the KGB long ago), and did not return. His wife Irina and some friends spent the night looking for him. Shortly before dawn she learned in the KGB reception room that her husband had been "detained." He remained in the Kaluga investigative prison for 17 months, in total isolation, with no access to family, friends, or legal counsel. Five days before his arrest he had been released from a hospital, where doctors had discovered that in addition to his gastric ulcers and high blood pressure, he was in the first stages of tuberculosis.

Upon hearing of his friend's arrest, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn ruefully remarked that "it reflects the decision of the Soviet authorities to crush by hunger and poverty hundreds of families of persecuted and imprisoned people." Solzhenitsyn asked the prominent American lawyer Edward Bennett Williams to defend Ginzburg. Williams accepted, commenting that his defense "is not a case but a cause." Fifteen Soviet lawyers refused to defend Ginzburg, and Williams was denied an entry visa into the USSR.

At the trial, Sakharov asked to testify. Request denied.

Besides the social fund there was another reason for Ginzburg's arrest. Like Dr. Yuri Orlov and Anatoly Shcharansky, he belonged to Moscow's Helsinki Watch Group, which had committed itself to monitoring the Soviet Union's adherence to the humanitarian provisions of the Helsinki agreements. Ginzburg helped prepare several of the group's documents, including an exhaustive study on living conditions in Soviet prisons and camps.

In January 1977, the KGB staged raids on the apartments of members of the group, including Ginzburg's and Orlov's. To the human rights community this was a bad omen; and a month later, both men were arrested. During the 19-hour search of the Ginzburg apartment, Senior Investigator Borovik planted $130 and DM1400 in the bathroom closet. Among the items he confiscated were Ginzburg's files on Soviet political prisoners, letters sent by prisoners and their families, translations of President Carter's press interviews, and assorted books, *samizdat* documents, notebooks, tape cassettes, and a typewriter. Five thousand rubles belonging to the social fund were also confiscated, along with the Ginzburgs' salaries that totaled about 300 rubles. When Irina Ginzburg asked: "How are we going to live?" one of the officials picked up 38 kopecks that had fallen to the floor and told her: "Here, this will be enough for you."

As had been the case 10 years earlier, Ginzburg's arrest provoked a flood of protest letters demanding his release and praising his selflessness. Prisoners were particularly saddened. "Hardly anyone else has done so much to lighten the physical and moral conditions in which Soviet prisoners of conscience are kept. . . . There is hardly another person who is as respected and loved by them as Aleksandr Ginzburg," wrote Dr. Kronid Lubarsky, who had just been released from Vladimir Prison after five years of incarceration. "We bow before him."

Many dissidents feared that after Ginzburg's arrest and the confiscation of his files, the social fund would be snuffed out. Two women who had long been active in the human rights movement, Tatiana Khodorovich and Malva Landa, undertook to continue the fund. "We have taken upon ourselves a difficult, but honorable and absolutely necessary duty," they said. Khodorovich was later forced into exile; her cousin, Sergei Khodorovich, took her place. The third administrator is Irina Ginzburg.

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Lately she has been receiving threatening letters and telephone calls from individuals who accuse her and others involved in the fund of "mismanaging it for selfish interests." A man by the name of Novoseltsov, who was in prison as a common criminal and gave false testimony against Ginzburg during the last trial, has threatened to kill the Ginzburgs' children, now three and five. Sakharov has received similar threats, but the authorities ignore all of this.

In September Natalia Solzhenitsyn, president of the social fund, made a formal announcement that the fund's administrators in the West "have received accurate accounts, verifying that the distribution of the money in the Soviet Union is being carried out accurately and beyond reproach." She added that this latest attack on the fund is yet "another spectacle initiated by the KGB to smother completely the help being given to prisoners." And the fund's friends in Moscow responded with their own announcement, saying that help is still dispensed "regularly" and "in greater volume than before."

On a bleak February morning this year Irina Ginzburg called me in New York from the Moscow telegraph station. She learned that we had organized an Aleksandr Ginzburg Defense Committee in the United States, with members who include such prominent writers as Arthur Miller, Saul Bellow, Edward Albee, and Kurt Vonnegut. Irina expressed her gratitude to all those who had joined and then started to pour out a story that kept me glued to the telephone. "During the past year I have been trying to transmit warm clothing to my husband, but it has all been in vain," she said. "I have also been asking them to give him a Bible; this is absolutely essential for my husband, he is a Christian, but they have refused . . . he can receive one food parcel per month, which I drop through a small window at the Kaluga prison, but I never know whether he actually receives them . . . As for my own situation, I have finally been able to get a job as a housekeeper . . . As you know, I have a higher education and have taught at Moscow University for many years but then I was fired . . . now, with great difficulty, I have at least been able to get this sort of work." Her voice sounded unbelievably calm when she added: "In our difficult life here, where there seems to be no movement forward, everything that is being done for us is so important; please convey my warmest gratitude, love and sympathy to all."

Irina Ginzburg's reference to the Bible reminded me that Aleksandr Ginzburg was a practicing member of the Russian Orthodox Church, although at 16, when children of mixed marriages have the right to choose their nationality (his father was Russian and his mother is a Jew), he claimed "Jewish nationality" as it is termed in the Soviet Union, and took his mother's family name, in defiance of Stalin's anti-Semitic regime.

Aleksandr Ginzburg's third trial began July 10. When he was brought to the courtroom he was feeling very ill. He asked for permission to sit during the proceedings. He was forced to stand. A day later he collapsed, and had to be given medical treatment. When his wife first saw him, she could not believe that "the stooped, white-haired invalid was my husband." The prosecution brought witnesses to portray him as a drunkard given to debauchery, who lived a parasitic life on money sent from abroad. He was accused of "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda," a charge that rested in part on his alleged distribution of books considered "anti-Soviet," such as *The Gulag Archipelago*.

Nobel prize winner and human rights advocate Andrei Sakharov, for whom Ginzburg had worked for one and a half years as a personal secretary, asked to appear in court as a character witness on his behalf, but the request was denied. Sakharov, along with other friends, spent most of the trial outside the Kaluga courtroom. On the fourth day, when the sentence had been pronounced, a prison van was dispatched to the building and quickly drove away. Sakharov, holding a small bouquet of roses, and the others, ran after it, calling "Alik," in the hope of seeing him. When the doors of the vehicle opened, only empty beer bottles were rolling across the floor. Plainclothes policeman and KGB agents who were swarming in the area jeered Sakharov with an anti-Semitic remark: "Hey, Zuckerman, did you see your Ginzburg?" (The name "Sakharov" in Russian translates into the Yiddish "Zuckerman.") Andrei Sakharov stood frozen in the street, pale as snow.

The court called him a "dangerous repeat offender." Sentence: 8 years.

The court called Aleksandr Ginzburg a "specially dangerous repeat offender" and sent him to the Mordovian camp No. 1 (approximately 300 miles from Moscow), the harshest of all, where he is now serving his term.

After a 24-hour visit in September, his wife reported: "The cell in which my husband and the other prisoners are kept is so damp that water runs down the walls and mice are constantly scurrying across the floor . . . the prisoners must work eight hours a day, including Saturdays. The labor which they perform is among the most difficult and hazardous—polishing glass for chandeliers. Thick clouds of silicon dust hang in the work cell but the prisoners perform their task without any respirators . . ." Nor can they wear protective gloves. "The prisoners' cut hands are constantly immersed in icy cold water and sand," she said, "and they must also lift heavy weights, up to 22 pounds." A prisoner's diet—rotten cabbage soup, watery gruel, and salty herring—comes to barely 2000 calories per day, enough for a child but not for a man doing hard labor.

The only letters he has been allowed to receive are from his wife and their young son. Letters sent by friends are not given to him. As Ginzburg is not allowed to pass on written notes or messages to anyone on the outside, his wife had to memorize his words:

"Nineteen months have passed from that moment when KGB agents grabbed me outside my house, twisted my arms and threw me into a waiting car which brought me to jail," he said. "After that I was constantly threatened with execution for allegedly committing treason . . . they spread malicious lies about me, and this continues up to the present. But I want everyone to know that my friends and I did not do anything which was against the law . . . everything we said was true. . . . And tell everyone on the outside that I'm still a member of the Helsinki Watch Group." ❏

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Do parents have the right to decide where their children will be born? The courts and organized medicine say, no.

The Fight Against Home Birth

By Susan Stern

WHEN THE third child of Robert and Christine Gannage was born "white and lifeless" in their bedroom last June, they considered it the "will of God." But when the infant died five days later, Gregory Jacobson, district attorney of San Luis Obispo County, California, charged Marianne Doshi, the lay midwife who had attended the birth, with murder.

For the last decade there has been a bitter controversy over home birth, but never before have the authorities and parents clashed more dramatically over whether parents have the right to choose where their children are to be born. Parents choosing home birth have been threatened with child-abuse charges; doctors assisting at home births have lost their hospital privileges; insurance companies in California and Illinois have ended malpractice coverage for home deliveries; lay (non-nurse) midwives have been prosecuted for "practicing medicine without a license." But Marianne Doshi was the first midwife to be charged with murder—charged because a death occurred while she was committing the misdemeanor of "practicing medicine without a license."

Only 14 states permit lay midwives like Marianne Doshi to assist mothers in delivering their children. And even though the demand for home births has soared in recent years, medical and legal opposition to home birth has also increased. Both the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) have come out against home birth. (In most states, nurse-midwives are licensed to practice, but they must work under a doctor's supervision and rarely leave the hospital.) So lay midwives around the country have begun to fear that what happened to the Gannages and Marianne Doshi will happen to them too.

Robert Gannage is a real estate broker; Christine, a wife and mother. They live with their two children in a comfortable house in Los Osos, a small beach-front community bordering San Luis Obispo. In many ways, they are typical of the kind of parents who choose home birth in the "medically advanced" states. In the South and Southwest, parents who have their children at home tend to be poor rural blacks or Latinos who are not served by hospitals. Elsewhere in the country, however, families choosing home births fit a standard middle-class pattern. According to a 1975 ethnographic study conducted in the San Francisco Bay area, not even 10 percent of families who chose home birth could be described as "hippies" or members of the "counterculture." Like the Gannages, most of the 300 families studied were supported by gainfully employed fathers and lived in single-family dwellings with one or two cars in the garage.

In states like California, which outlawed lay midwifery in 1949, the home-birth movement is a rejection of hospital technology and its costs. Robert Gannage says he and his wife chose home birth not for financial reasons, but because the hospital births of their first two children were "a very poor experience." A devoutly Christian couple, the Gannages first sought a physician who would assist at a home birth but were told they would never find one. Indeed, according to Dr. R. Marshall Jeldricks, president of the local obstetrics society, there are no private obstetricians in San Luis Obispo County who will give home-birth mothers prenatal care or provide aid willingly in the event of com-

Susan Stern is assistant managing editor of Synapse, *a publication of the health-science schools of the University of California, San Francisco. Her articles have appeared in such publications as* Seven Days *and* In These Times.

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plications. "If you give prenatal care you condone home birth, which we feel is not medically safe," says Jeldricks. "I don't have any statistics on it at hand, but with any birth, even an apparently normal, low-risk pregnancy, something can go wrong at any time and you don't want to be too far from hospital instruments."

Unable to find a physician to help them, the Gannages arranged for Marianne Doshi, whom they had met at prenatal birth classes, to attend the birth. They say they had no idea lay midwifery is illegal in California.

Nor did they know the strength of the opposition to home birth in their community. Although many of the older citizens of San Luis Obispo County were born at home, the county's Council on Child Protection, which includes representatives from the medical community, sheriff's department, and district attorney's office, believes that home birth is potentially child abuse. Two years ago, the sheriff's department attempted to bring a child-abuse case against a young couple whose baby was stillborn at home.

County officials were also trying to put lay midwives out of business. Four months before the Gannage birth, "an anonymous female with medical training" gave the district attorney the names of four midwives. Among them was Marianne Doshi—wife, mother, and former college student-body vice president. Ward Jayne, an investigator for the Board of Medical Quality Assurance, says he then met with Doshi and asked her to sign a statement swearing off midwifery. According to Jayne, Doshi said she would talk to her lawyer. Jayne called Doshi again a few weeks before the Gannage birth. "She said she didn't have to talk to me," Jayne recalls.

The case against Doshi

WITH DOSHI BY HER SIDE, Christine Gannage went into labor on the evening of June 3. After an unusually rapid labor, she delivered a girl with a knotted umbilical cord. "She wasn't breathing and there wasn't any heartbeat," said Robert Gannage. "Marianne did everything she could. She kept up mouth-to-mouth and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). I called the fire department rescue team."

According to the Gannages, the midwife and rescue team continued mouth-to-mouth and CPR on the way to Sierra Vista Hospital, about 20 minutes away. The infant was taken in immediately, but Mrs. Gannage, with vaginal lacerations, was turned away because she did not have a staff doctor. Robert Gannage then accompanied his wife to San Luis Obispo General Hospital where, he says, "She underwent three hours of surgery. They sutured her up piece by piece."

Even as Christine Gannage was being wheeled out of the operating room, the medical establishment began to build its case against Doshi. Mr. Gannage says he was "whisked away by some doctor who pumped me about the birth and then told me the story was a possible felony conviction." The doctor was General's chief of obstetrics, Dr. John Mahnke. "I talked to him because I thought he needed information to help the baby," Gannage says. "But he took advantage of me. He didn't care about the baby or me or my wife; his attitude was, Aha, I finally got one!"

The Gannages never saw their daughter again. She died the day they planned to visit her in San Francisco, where she had been flown by an air-ambulance team. The coroner ruled that death had been caused by asphyxiation, "at the hands of another."

According to sheriff's detective Larry McDonner and investigator Jayne, Dr. Mahnke called them about the Gannage incident two days after the birth. Although the Gannages did not wish to press charges against Doshi, the district attorney convened a grand jury. The Gannages, granted immunity from child-abuse charges, testified reluctantly. "Everybody has been very concerned about the injustice done here," Christine Gannage told the grand jury. "I don't believe that Marianne did any injustice. She gave me more care than I ever received from any cold, unfeeling obstetrician . . ."

"The baby never really became conscious," Robert Gannage said. "They just kept her alive. Without modern medicine she would never have been alive at all."

Prosecutor Gregory Jacobson disagreed. He said his medical experts told him the baby would have lived if it had been born in a hospital. A fetal monitor, he said, employed in stage-two labor, might have alerted doctors to the knot in time for them to perform a forceps delivery, or if the problem was discovered earlier, a Caesarean, and save the baby; or an intubation tube, inserted down the infant's throat when she was born in distress, might have started her breathing before her brain was permanently damaged. Jacobson admitted that Doshi, lacking these tools, "did a pretty good job." The statistics show that babies born with a "true knot" in the umbilical cord are six times more likely to die than babies born without this complication.

Doubtful that he could win his case, Jacobson nevertheless went to court, convinced that birth at home without the latest medical technology is riskier than hospital birth, and therefore unfair to the unborn. "That baby had rights too," Jacobson said. "That's what I had to keep telling myself to keep my peace of mind."

Indeed, the reason most often given for outlawing midwifery and home birth is the rights of the unborn. But what about the rights of the parents? The Gannages, who believe their child has gone home to the Lord, think that the state's intervention in their personal tragedy was the only injustice. "We had some peace in our lives until the state came in and claimed the baby for its own," Robert Gannage said. "You know, it's never your baby, it's the state's baby and that's the law. In some cases they take your child and put it in a home, and in other cases they take it to do an autopsy, but whatever the case is, if you don't do what they want you to do with it, they come in and let you know just whose baby it is."

Doshi's trial was scheduled for December 4, but in a move that surprised even her lawyer, the judge threw out the indictment at the pretrial hearing on October 20. "I really feel that we have a segment of our society that wants to choose an alternative to what the California Medical Association . . . wants to provide, as far as the birth of children goes," said Superior Court Judge Richard Kirkpatrick, "and I think these people probably have that right under our Constitution. . . . I hope that the medical profession has enough maturity at this point . . . to say that there are alternative ways . . . and work with the representatives and with the people that want to exercise this alternative for themselves, to be closer to their children and have their children at home." Dismissing the case, Kirkpatrick said, "My sympathy is really with the Gannages, and I certainly hope this is the end of their tribulation."

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Legal illogic

THE STATE IS NOT APPEALING Kirkpatrick's decision, and so the legal question raised by the Gannage case is still up in the air: Do parents have a right to decide where their children will be born?

On the basis of other decisions, it appears that the courts' answer to this question is, no. Last summer, the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit ruled in an Illinois case that the constitutional right to privacy does not guarantee parents the right to decide "by whom or by what method" their child will be born. Citing a previous ruling *(Fitzgerald* v. *Porter Memorial Hospital)* that a father did not have the right to be present at a hospital birth, the court said that the choice of method of childbirth "is of a different magnitude than deciding whether the child shall be born." This latter choice, the Supreme Court ruled in *Roe* v. *Wade* (1973), belongs solely to the woman during the first trimester.

The California courts have also used *Roe* v. *Wade* to contest the assertion that mothers have a right to choose the conditions of childbirth. "In recent years the constitutional right to privacy derived from the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments has been substantially expanded to protect certain personal choices pertaining to child rearing, marriage, procreation and abortion," the California Supreme Court wrote two years ago in *Bowland* v. *Municipal Court,* a Santa Cruz midwifery case. "However, the right to privacy has never been interpreted so broadly as to protect a woman's choice of the manner and circumstances in which her baby is born."

According to the court, *Roe* v. *Wade* had established that by the third trimester of gestation "the state's interest in the rights of the unborn child supersedes the woman's own privacy right." Consequently, it ruled that "for the same policy reasons for which the legislature may prohibit the abortion of unborn children who have reached the age of viability, it may require that those who assist in childbirth have valid licences."

But legalizing lay midwifery would not end the controversy. By the legal logic of the California and Illinois rulings, the state can ban home births if it decides such births are a threat to the "rights of the unborn." Indeed, opponents of home birth argue that *Roe* v. *Wade* establishes a basis for states to require that all children be born in a hospital. In other words, parents may have no right to decide where their child is to be born.

The logic of *Roe* v. *Wade,* however, is not applicable to the issue of home births. Abortions and home births are not comparable. The decision to abort is a premeditated act to bring about a premeditated outcome: the destruction of the fetus. But only the most extreme opponents of home birth would call a planned home delivery an attempt on the life of the child. In fact, the effort to regulate home births by the logic of *Roe* v. *Wade* rests on the assumption that the risks of home birth are sufficiently greater than of hospital birth, giving the state an interest in the unborn child's welfare that overrides the individual rights of the mother.

But this assumption is false. Although most doctors and lawmakers believe that home birth is riskier than hospital birth, statistics show otherwise: The most recent studies of the relative risks of home birth, carried out by Dr. Lewis E. Mehl, of Berkeley, California, demonstrate that planned home deliveries are no more dangerous than hospital births.

In 1976 Mehl studied 1146 home births from the practices of five different home-birth services in northern California. Some of the services included midwives and obstetricians, others consisted of only midwives. But the combined fetal and infant mortality rate for the group was 9.5 per thousand live births, compared to 20.3 per thousand for the entire state in 1973.

In the same year Mehl compared 1046 home deliveries and 1046 hospital deliveries matched on a case-by-case basis for maternal age, risk factors, length of gestation, parity, education, and socio-economic status. The results showed "no significant differences in neonatal [one week after birth] and perinatal [after one week] mortality, number of neurologically abnormal infants, incidence of low birth weights or neonatal infection." Mehl concluded, "Pre-selected women may labor and deliver at home in the United States without significant additional risk, and at a lower cost than hospital delivery."

Despite these statistics, the California Medical Association opposed a recent bill to provide training and licensing for midwives, on the ground that it would facilitate home birth. "I can't give you any statistics on it," says Thomas Elmendorf, CMA's chairman on legislation, "but we feel that we have greatly improved infant mortality statistics in California and we feel that a movement that would take birth out of a technological environment would seriously threaten those statistics."

Most hospital-birth proponents cite a recent state-by-state survey—by ACOG—that rates home-birth risks two to five times greater than the risks of hospital birth. According to a NorCal Mutual Insurance Company spokeman, it was largely on the basis of this study that his firm decided to discontinue its malpractice coverage for home births.

The ACOG survey, however, is misleading. It includes within a single category all out-of-hospital births, without distinguishing planned home births from surprise deliveries in the backseats of taxicabs. Even Dr. Warren Pearse, executive director of ACOG, admits the study is flawed. According to Pearse, "The evidence we have in the United States shows that if you preselect low-risk mothers for home births, and then transfer about 12 to 20 percent of the ones who have problems to the hospital, you can achieve results equivalent to the hospital."

Driving out midwives

DESPITE STUDIES AND STATISTICS that have repeatedly demonstrated the safety of lay midwives and home birth, American obstetricians have fought midwifery ever since they were first allowed to enter the lying-in room. And ever since the doctors displaced the midwives, doctors have fought home birth.

With the invention of forceps in the early seventeenth century, "male midwives" entered the lying-in chamber where only women had previously been allowed. The female midwives angrily attacked what they saw as an invasion of disrespectful men with unnecessary technology, but within two hundred years the female midwives were on the defensive. In 1859 the American Medical Association recognized obstetrics as a branch of medicine. The use of ergot to speed up contractions and silver nitrate to protect the in-

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fants' eyes from infection, and the invention of the stethoscope and x-rays, widened the gap between the new "science" of birth and the old "art" of midwifery.

In an article published in *Medical News* in 1898, a New York City obstetrician, Dr. H.J. Garrigues, said that midwives were "inveterate quacks . . . they never acknowledge their ignorance and are always willing to give advice." Garrigues urged the United States to "form a vanguard in a war of extermination against the pestiferous remnant of the pre-antiseptic days, midwives and schools of midwifery."

Like most of the physicians of his day, Garrigues, who deplored the "ignorance" and "filth" of the midwives, nevertheless opposed training them. He reasoned that the existing state of unorganized, barely trained midwifery "could not last forever, and that it must lead to the enactment of a law, by which midwifery, as all other branches of medical practice, is exclusively placed in the hands of the medical profession, where it belongs."

Undeniably, American midwives lacked the training of their European counterparts. At the turn of the century there were only two or three legitimate schools of midwifery amid a host of diploma mills. But obstetric training at the turn of the century may have been little better. In 1911 a leading obstetrician, Dr. J. Whitridge Williams, concluded on the basis of his study of obstetrics that medical schools were "inadequately equipped for teaching obstetrics properly." Infant and maternal mortality rates in America were extremely high, but the obstetricians blamed the high rates on the midwives, and called for their elimination.

The arguments of the obstetricians had their effect, and the number of births attended by midwives declined steadily throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. Meanwhile, in places such as New York City and New Jersey, where midwife training programs had been set up, the infant mortality rate also dropped. In 1907, four years before the Bellevue school of midwifery opened, New York City had 144 deaths per thousand live births. In 1921, the rate was halved to 71.1 deaths, and the city department of health reported, "with better midwives, there have become better mothers, better babies and a better infant morality rate."

In 1921, over the objections of the AMA, Congress passed the Sheppard-Towner Maternity and Infancy Protection Act, which allocated funds to 31 states for midwife training. In 1929, however, the program was repealed, largely through the efforts of the AMA. Faced with bans on midwifery and the opposition of doctors, the new schools rapidly folded, with the Bellevue facility the last to go, in 1935.

By 1930 physicians were delivering 85 percent of U.S. babies, and by 1940, physicians were delivering over half of American babies in hospitals. But the infant mortality rates were not dropping substantially, and the maternal mortality rates were creeping upward.

Alarmed by these trends, the government and the medical community undertook three studies on birth in the 1930s. These blamed the high rates of death on doctors rather than on midwives. The first part of the 1930 report of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection stated that "the midwife is not the determining factor in the high maternal mortality rate of any particular area in the United States." The second volume also stated that "it seems possible that all the advances in medical knowledge have been almost lost to the parturient woman through too great a recourse to instrumental delivery." The report noted such disadvantages of hospital deliveries as "exposure to cross infection," and a "false feeling of security in the operating room" which, said the report, leads to "much unnecessary operating with its resulting trauma and increased morbidity and mortality."

The Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, in its 1932 report, announced that "the untrained midwives approach, and the trained midwives surpass the [safety] record of physicians in normal deliveries." And the New York Academy of Medicine's Committee on Health Relations concluded that "the midwife is a proper attendant for properly selected cases of labor and delivery . . . we have seen her results are as good as obtained by physicians under what are justly regarded as comparable circumstances," and noted that "the great increase of the hospitalization for the normal patient has failed to bring the hoped-for reduction in puerperal morbidity and mortality."

Though the studies vindicated the midwives, patients still flocked to doctors and hospitals, drawn by the promise of a safe, painless, anesthetized birth. By 1973, 99.3 percent of all Americans were born in hospitals with the assistance of doctors.

With the resurgence of the popularity of home births, and the decreasing birth rate, obstetricians may once again be worried about their standing, and their livelihood. Michael Krisman, deputy director of health personnel for California's Department of Consumer Affairs, says that if only 10 percent of California mothers opted for home birth, obstetricians would lose $40 million a year. Mothers would also cut the cost of childbirth in half, and the state Medi-Cal fund would save $10 million.

But obstetricians firmly deny that their objection to midwifery and home birth is motivated by greed. "When you have to transfer 12 to 20 percent of them to the hospital," says ACOG's Pearse, "my personal opinion is, why bother having them at home?"

To those who believe in home birth, the question "why bother?" which many obstetricians echo, symbolizes the harsh impersonality that has driven them from the hospitals to their homes.

"It is my belief that as long as there is such a thing as personal freedom remaining in the United States there will always be a demand, albeit small, for home deliveries," says Dr. Milton Estes, a home-birth doctor in Mill Valley, California.

"At home," says Estes, "people feel in control of the process. In the hospital they fear they won't be. They're afraid they won't be free to move around, they fear separation from the infant and needless procedures—such as routine intravenous [feedings], routine fetal monitor, breaking of water, induced labor. But these are the negative reasons. For a lot of people it just feels right to have a baby in the intimacy of their own home. Birth is not just a medical process, it is one of the penultimate experiences of life."

Before the Doshi case, many people thought they had a "right" to have a home birth, despite medical opposition. But now no one is sure. This uncertainty has prompted lay midwives to organize more determinedly than ever before in American history. And it has caused Robert Gannage to change his worldview.

"You know, I was never that aware of the state," says Gannage. "I never took drugs or went to jail or anything. You can go through your whole life and not have anything to do with the state, and then something like this happens, and you realize how powerful the state is. You cross the state, boy, and they let you know it."

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TRUJILLO: The Death of the Goat, by Bernard Diederich. Little, Brown, 264 pp., $9.95.

Free world colossus

PENNY LERNOUX

THE CLASSIC LATIN AMERican *caudillo,* Generalissimo Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina ran the Dominican Republic as his personal fiefdom for 31 years, until May 1961, when he was assassinated by disgruntled Dominican aristocrats with the blessing of the Kennedy administration. Unlike his Cuban counterpart, the equally despotic Fulgencio Batista, Trujillo left a heritage that plagued the small Caribbean sugar republic long after his departure.

PENNY LERNOUX, who is a contributing editor of INQUIRY, lives in Bogotá, Colombia, and is a specialist in Latin American affairs.

Many of the island nation's current political and economic problems can be traced to the Trujillo era, including a trigger-happy military and the corrupt, 12-year administration of Trujillo's adulating crony, perennial President Joaquin Balaguer.

In *Trujillo: The Death of the Goat*, Bernard Diederich touches only briefly on the nefarious influence of Trujillo and concentrates on the assassination itself, which unfortunately limits the scope and impact of the book. What comes through only peripherally are the motives of the principal conspirators, who belonged to the country's old agrarian oligarchy and therefore hated the upstart Trujillo as much for displacing them as for his bloodthirsty tyranny. But the narrative is fast-paced and gripping, fulfilling the publishers' promise of an account that reads like a "nightmarish novel"; as, for example, the description of the torture of one of the conspirators, who dies of a heart attack in his filthy cell after discovering that the unusually substantial meal his jailers have just given him was his murdered son's flesh. Like so much that happens in Latin America, the reality described by Diederich is more terrible than any fiction.

BRUCE MCGILLIVRAY

The swaggering, mustachioed Trujillo, nicknamed "the goat," perfectly fitted the U.S. caricature of the Latin American dictator. His favorite costume included platform shoes, a gold-braided uniform laden with medals, and a plumed bicorne. He was both an infamous womanizer who demanded the virginity of the daughters of his closest associates, and a megalomaniac (among the many sites dedicated in his honor was the oldest city in the hemisphere, Santo Domingo, the capital, which the dictator renamed Ciudad Trujillo). The generalissimo was also a shrewd politician and efficient administrator who brought a measure of progress to the Dominican Republic—but the fruits of that progress were monopolized by the Trujillo family, who controlled nearly 80 percent of the economy.

Just as the Somoza dynasty in Nicaragua had its origins in a U.S. Marine occupation during the early part of the century, so too the impoverished Trujillo got his start in power as a lieutenant in the National Guard founded by the U.S. Marines, who ran the country from 1916 to 1924. When the Americans left, Trujillo was put in charge of the armed forces; six years later he was president, at the age of 39. A Trujillo would probably still be in control of the Dominican Republic, just as a Somoza clings to power in Nicaragua, had it not been for Fidel Castro's successful revolution in neighboring Cuba. Until 1960, when Washington began to worry about the revolutionary ferment caused by such old-fashioned dictatorships, the United States ignored the atrocities

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committed by Trujillo, and Trujillo scrupulously observed the formalities necessary for U.S. support. He paid off foreign debts, always voted the "right" way in the OAS and the UN, kept the streets clean and the "commies" in jail, and maintained order in a country "not ready" for democracy.

Trujillo also spent considerable money and energy on cultivating important contacts. Joseph Davies, who later would send back glowing reports of his "mission to Moscow" as Roosevelt's ambassador to Stalin, was impressed by Trujillo, whom he also visited on behalf of the President. Davies's recommendations resulted in a policy of debt forgiveness and the extension of private credit. Trujillo persuaded Secretary of State Cordell Hull to lift U.S. controls on Dominican customs (a relic of the marines' occupation), and in appreciation erected a statue of Hull—one of the first to be pulled down after Trujillo's assassination. Such U.S. senators as William Jenner, George Smathers, and Strom Thurmond eulogized the Trujillo regime for its "stability" and "firm friendship" with the United States. Vice President Richard Nixon praised the country's progress when he visited the island, and his wife Pat received an expensive piece of jewelry from Trujillo. A number of prominent citizens, including Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., and civil-liberties lawyer Morris Ernst, were Trujillo's paid lobbyists. Congressmen also were persuaded to champion his cause—for a price. According to the dictator's former chief of military intelligence, General Arturo Espaillat, "Trujillo had price lists for the purchase of some U.S. Congressmen. An ordinary run-of-the-mill Representative would cost about $5,000 or less. A few House committee chairmen could be had for about three times that much, depending on the committee. Senators came higher, of course. A chairman of a key committee could run from $50,000 to $75,000."

But even Trujillo's good friend, Representative Harold Cooley (D.-N.C.), chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, could not help him once Washington decided that his usefulness had ended. As Diederich tells it, the beginning of the end came in 1956 when Trujillo's agents abducted Columbia University lecturer Jesús de Galíndez from his New York apartment and flew him to his death in the Dominican Republic. A Spanish exile who had spent seven years in the Dominican Republic, Galíndez had written a mildly critical doctoral dissertation about the Trujillo regime. For this indiscretion he was drugged, beaten, and tortured before being lowered, inch by inch, into a vat of boiling water; his body later was fed to the sharks.

U.S. suspicion of Trujillo's involvement in Galíndez 's disappearance increased after Gerald Murphy, the American pilot who had flown Galíndez to the Dominican Republic, boasted in Miami about his exploit. Shortly afterwards, Murphy was killed in the Dominican Republic. His Dominican fellow pilot Octavio de la Maza also was murdered.

TRUJILLO HAD LONG nursed a grudge against Venezuela's democratic president, Rómulo Betancourt. The Galíndez scandal was still in the news when Betancourt narrowly escaped being killed by a bomb planted by Trujillo's agents. Castro's revolution, the growth of a left-wing underground in the Dominican Republic, and threats by the Venezuelan and Costa Rican governments to invade the Dominican Republic if the United States did not eliminate Trujillo, persuaded Washington to strengthen contacts with the Dominican opposition, and to support economic and diplomatic sanctions against the regime by the OAS. Informed that the United States would welcome Trujillo's assassination, the opposition was further inspired when the three beautiful Mirabal sisters were clubbed to death because they and their husbands belonged to a left-wing movement. This triple crime was the last straw, according to Diederich, since it wounded the Dominicans' *machismo*.

The assassination plot was likewise motivated by Latin mores. Most of the 20 conspirators were drawn into the plot, not because they shared a common ideology or had a plan for a post-Trujillo government, but because they were *compadres*, or godfathers, of each other's children (*compadrazgo* in Catholic Latin America is far stronger than any political ties). Among the leaders was Antonio de la Maza, brother of the Dominican pilot murdered to cover up the Galíndez scandal. Like most of his fellow conspirators, de la Maza came from a well-to-do, politically prominent family having sizable agricultural holdings and old scores to settle with Trujillo.

That the plot succeeded was due neither to the intelligence of the assassins nor to their contacts in the CIA, but rather to Trujillo's supreme confidence that no one would dare harm the "Benefactor of the Fatherland" as he drove about the countryside with only his chauffeur as guard. Although the CIA later took credit for Trujillo's death, Diederich makes it clear that all the CIA contributed was three M-1 carbines—and even so, Washington wanted to back down at the last minute, fearful of another debacle in the Caribbean in the wake of the Bay of Pigs. After a year of plotting with Trujillo's opponents in the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Washington, and even training an invasion force in Venezuela, the CIA quickly washed its hands of the assassination. The CIA station chief and his men were on the first plane out of Santo Domingo following Trujillo's death. U.S. businessman Simon Thomas Stocker, who served as a CIA go-between for the plotters, was "shocked by the CIA's careless handling of Dominican exiles and contacts."

Only two of the assassins lived to tell their story, for, contrary to their expectations, neither the military nor the people rose up in spontaneous rebellion. In the bloody reprisals ordered by Trujillo's son Ramfis, over four hundred Dominicans were arrested and 26 shot or tortured to death, including Ramfis's kinsman, General José Román, secretary of the armed forces. As Don Kurzman tells it in *The Revolt of the Damned,* Román "was left for days with his eyelids stitched to his eyebrows. . . . drenched with acid, beaten with a baseball bat, castrated, exposed to swarms of ants, and shocked endlessly in the electric chair, until finally a machine gun put him out of his misery."

Thanks to U.S. pressure and Ramfis's preference for the playboy life in Europe, the Trujillo family eventually abandoned the government to a puppet president, Joaquin Balaguer. The prissy-mannered professor was overthrown in 1962, only to make a comeback as the U.S. candidate in the 1966 elections a year after the marine invasion of the Dominican Republic. He was twice reelected.*

**The military reluctantly agreed to respect the results of the country's May 1978 presidential elections, in which Balaguer was bested by opposition candidate Antonio Guzmán, only after the U.S. and Venezuelan governments threatened sanctions.*

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While a considerable improvement over the Trujillo dictatorship, the Balaguer government made no attempt to change the structures of Dominican society. Trujillo properties were either sold to such U.S. corporate giants as Gulf & Western, or absorbed by the island's wealthy families who had close connections to the Balaguer government—including relatives of the conspirators. The vast majority of Dominicans are as poor and oppressed today as they were under the Trujillo regime.

Though Diederich does not develop the point, it is obvious that none of the conspirators gave any thought to political reform: their motives were either personal or else guided by a desire for economic and political gain. This does not lessen the heroism of their act, nor the terrible price they were forced to pay by the vengeful Trujillo family, but it does say a good deal about Dominican—and Latin American—society, which is governed by small cliques of landowners and industrialists. Coups and assassinations are still the accepted methods in the savage contest between the cliques of "ins" and "outs," with the populace as mere spectators.

SUNSET AT BLANDINGS, by P.G. Wodehouse, with notes and appendices by Richard Usborne. Simon and Schuster, 216 pp., $8.95.

Ripping to the end

X. J. KENNEDY

IN THE UNIVERSE OF P. G. Wodehouse, the stream of time appears to have frozen solid. Just beyond the walls of Blandings Castle, the twentieth century noisily clatters by, not daring to intrude, leaving the castle's denizens permanently ensconced in the Britain of Edward VII. Nor has the proprietor of Blandings, Lord Emsworth, "that amiable and boneheaded peer," ever suffered from the rising taxes that have obliged so many actual peers to convert their rose gardens into amusement parks. Six decades after the appearance of the first Blandings novel (*Something New,* 1915), there occurs in this latest and last work a brief recognition of change in the complaint of ageless playboy Galahad Threepwood, "Do you realize that not a single leg in London has got a spat on it?"

On Saint Valentine's morning, 1975, the 93-year-old Wodehouse worked, as was his custom, on another novel. His death later in the day put a stop to *Sunset at Blandings,* whose somewhat funereal title was provided by its English publisher. (Wodehouse had considered other possibilities: *All's Well at Blandings, Women Are Peculiar, The Weird Old Buster.)* Of 22 projected chapters, 16 have come down to us in a more sketchy form than the old perfectionist would have liked, together with a large batch of working notes from which we can tell how the story might have ended.

These notes, some reproduced in autograph, have been sorted by Richard Usborne, a scholar who wears his learning lightly. Wisely, Usborne hasn't attempted to complete Wodehouse's book for him, thus avoiding the perils of that anonymous recent writer who supplied an ending to Jane Austen's fragmentary *Sanditon.* (Where the prose of Austen stops and that of the second scribe commences, you notice a definite bump, as when your car turns off a smooth highway onto the dirt of a country road.) There's also a cheerful essay by Usborne on the layout of Blandings Castle and environs, and a reasonably profound attempt to infer from a stack of Wodehouse novels the timetables for trains between Paddington Station and Market Blandings—a study, to be sure, not likely to be superseded in a hurry. Evidently, this volume will appeal less keenly to the casual reader who seeks mere entertainment, and more to the devout Wodehousean eager for a squint into the workshop of the master.

But *Sunset at Blandings* has a further importance. When have we ever before had insight into the methods of a novelist so incredibly old, and still going like a steam calliope? The book may long stand unique in the annals of both literature and gerontology. As Wodehouse grew ancient, he remained astonishingly clear of mind, firm of style, and chipper of heart; and it seems that at 93 he wrote with hardly less skill than he had commanded at 40. He was obliged to write more slowly and more laboriously. He suffered from a tendency to repeat himself, and he found himself often "writing short": getting his stories told too succinctly, so that he had to go back over them and flesh them out. When young, he had frothed over, with "three uniquely brilliant and entirely original similes to each page" (as an awe-struck Evelyn Waugh once noticed), but in old age his mind would grasp at beautiful similes he had used before, some of them in books written fifty years earlier.

In the very first sentence of *Leave It to Psmith,* a classic of 1924, Lord Emsworth stands at the window of his great library, "drooping like a wet sock." In *Sunset at Blandings* this same description of his lordship's posture turns up at least twice. There are other echoes of the past: the great line, "Had he not been seated he would undoubtedly have drawn himself up to his full height," and a reference to a character who "drained the bitter cup only to find a dead mouse at the bottom." For all we know, Wodehouse may have tossed in these bits of old gold merely as temporary decoration, and had he lived to revise, would have replaced them with freshly minted ones. But we get a sense that this is a story we have heard before. Again, as in the earlier Psmith novel, events turn on the disappearance of a necklace, and on the infiltration of Blandings by someone

X. J. KENNEDY is the author of An Introduction to Fiction. *He is currently writing a comic novel.*

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bearing false papers of identity.

Still, what matter? A certain repetitiousness seems only natural in the work of any prolific writer who early in life sounds his individual tune and spends the rest of his days inventing melodic variations on it. In this last chronicle, he hits upon the brilliant device of making it difficult for an aged chancellor of the exchequer to propose marriage because of the constant surveillance of his bodyguard. Certainly Wodehouse remained to his dying day the English novel's grand master of intricate plot.

In structure, this last work is like one of those ingeniously dribbled canvases by Jackson Pollock in which whorls nest within whorls and part balances part in perfect symmetry. Pairs of old lovers balance pairs of young lovers, shrewd characters are matched with stupid foils. Whenever Wodehouse first drops the name of a new character, we can be sure that he or she will quickly enter the story, and be bound by some vital relationship to one of the principals. Where lesser (or more cautious) novelists shun coincidence, Wodehouse revels in it. And so, when two house guests turn up at Blandings simultaneously, they must prove to be long lost lovers, or old enemies. At the very moment when an aspiring young artist loses his post as drawing master at a girls' school, Lord Emsworth decides to have his prize sow's portrait painted. (This is another lovely bit of inventiveness: to display the likeness of the pig next to the Emsworth ancestral portraits, in Gally Threepwood's view, "could not but lend tone" to the gallery.) Lives interweave with other lives like threads in a busy loom.

"*MUSICAL COMEDIES* without music," Wodehouse once called his stories—thinking, no doubt, of his experience in writing lyrics and books for thirty-odd Broadway shows in collaboration with George and Ira Gershwin, Guy Bolton, and Jerome Kern. In his own life, he preferred a scene like that of a musical, devoid of all unpleasantness. His formula for longevity is one that few of us could accept. On his green, Long Island estate, as remote and impregnable as Blandings Castle, Wodehouse, with all his dogs, immersed himself in a timeless world of his own creation, writing fiction seven days a week, and, as Clarke has testified, simply ignoring whatever was worrisome, bothersome, or confusing.

The famous occasion of his internment in France by the Germans during World War II, when Wodehouse naively made broadcasts to America reassuring his friends that the Nazis weren't such bad fellows, caused him chagrin when in England his blindness and innocence were mistaken for treason. "The camp had an extraordinarily nice commander," he reminisced in 1973, still denying the existence of evil.

Unlike some greater writers—Joyce, Dickens—Wodehouse did not immortalize in fiction his dismal childhood, when he was shunted from aunt to aunt because his mother didn't want him; nor does his fiction directly capture his youth drudging in the grim London office of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank. In his novels, the race of man is seen to be foolish, yet harmless and basically sweet; and even the most selfish rascals seem guilty of no sins grave enough to justify their lasting damnation. If there are serpents within the little Eden of Blandings, they either reform, or are sent packing.

In a way, the fiction of Wodehouse is a kind of children's literature directed to adults: fantastic, cheery, and reassuring. Its spirit is manifest in its author's fondness for curious animals: Lord Emsworth's giant sow; Webster, the whisky-drinking cat of *Mulliner Nights*; and that sensitive pet bullfinch in *Summer Lightning,* whose cage the butler Beach discreetly covers lest it hear things that might shock it. Perhaps Wodehouse's fiction has something in common, too, with certain long-running comic strips. To make such a comparison is not to demean the novelist's more exacting art. But think of, say, "Bringing Up Father"—oddly similar, however American, in its endless procession of newly arrived millionaires, titled nobility (both real and phony), playboys, fortune hunters, pretentious poets, awful opera singers, and condescending butlers, cooks, and maids. Interestingly, at one moment in his *Sunset,* Wodehouse expresses admiration for those classic comic features, "about as old as Blandings Castle," that go on and on although "the fellows who started them have been dead for centuries." Maggie and Jiggs have outlived two of their mortal cartoonists, yet it seems unlikely that any other writer could pick up the pen Wodehouse let fall. Luckily, in his 65 years as a novelist, he produced enough musicals without music—or caricatures without drawings—to last the faithful almost forever.

THE CHRONICLES OF NARNIA, by C. S. Lewis. Macmillan, 7 vols., $12.50.

The gate to all good adventure

GEORGIA SMITH

THIS FALL MACMILLAN reissued—yet again—C.S. Lewis's fairy tales set in the land of Narnia. During his lifetime, Lewis was noted as the Christian apologist author of the satiric *Screwtape Letters*, in addition to a trilogy of science fiction novels, numerous popular essays on religion and literature, and scholarly works on medieval and renaissance English. The reading public, however, seems to have decided that his name will be passed from one generation to the next via the Narnia books. First published in the early 1950s, they have since become classics, far and away the most popular of Lewis's works.

The Narnia stories were not written in the manner of most children's books: strictly for children, and intended to be outgrown. Lewis's working assumption was that "No book is really worth reading at the age of ten which is not equally (and often far more) worth reading at the age of fifty . . . The only imaginative works we ought to grow out of are those which it would have been better not to have read at all. A mature palate will probably not much care for *crème de menthe*: but it ought still to enjoy bread and butter and honey." The colors of the Narnian background—a collage of classical myth, Christian allegory, and Germanic fairy-tale elements—grow brighter and deeper as a reader grows older, rather than fading into the haze

GEORGIA SMITH is Inquiry's researcher.

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of most juvenile literature, which requires the zealous imagination of a child to bring it into life.

Narnia's most persistently inviting quality is that it is believable: fantastic, but reasonable. As in the Middle Earth of Tolkien—the two writers were lifelong friends, colleagues at Oxford—Narnia's history and laws are consistent and continuous. With lucid descriptions, and a knack for catching just the right personal details to bring home an adventure, Lewis achieved this world by a Chestertonian method: "The adventures may be mad, but the adventurer must be sane." The narrative voice (definitely Lewis himself) is terribly level-headed, and the characters through which Narnia is presented are the most matter-of-fact foils for romance imaginable.

All but one of the stories (the exception is *The Horse and His Boy)* are told as the adventures of members of our world, transported by magic into Narnia. In *The Magician's Nephew*, two Victorian children, Digory and Polly, arrive there at the time of its creation by the great Lion, Aslan. Unfortunately they have come by mistake, through the disastrously inept magic of Digory's Uncle Andrew, a third-rate conjuror with wicked pretentions. In the confusion Andrew, and a London cabbie and his horse, and a witch from yet another world (whom everybody has been trying to escape) get dragged along as well. They find themselves at an uncomfortable vantage point for viewing the Creation.

The later Narnian adventures involve Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy—the Pevensie children—and, in the last books, their cousin Eustace Scrubb and his friend Jill Pole. Eustace's initiation into Narnia in *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is painful: he enters as a thoroughly insufferable brat who is nasty to everyone and will not see that nobody chose to be magicked into Narnia. He repeatedly demands to be let off the ship they've been landed on—at the nearest British consulate. He is thoroughly modern.

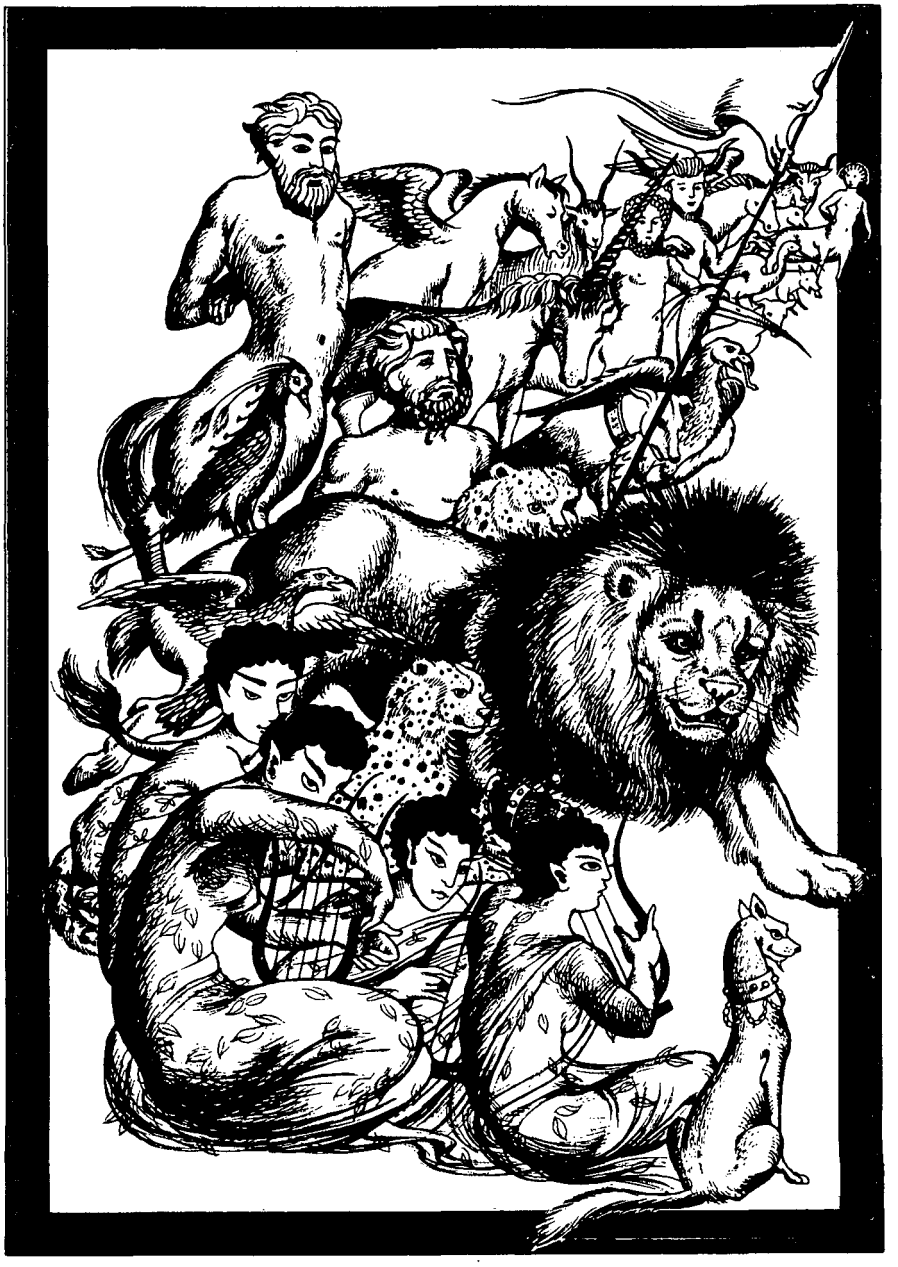
Even the most consistently resourceful and understanding person in the stories, Lucy (who, if she weren't so likable, would be an unbelievable Goody Two-Shoes), is appropriately frightened when she first walks into Narnia through an enchanted wardrobe. The faun she meets in a wintry woods is no less astonished than she, and their very natural responses make the magic afoot quite real.

Appropriateness is the unifying rule: A character may seem to speak or act outlandishly, but he always turns out to behave exactly as the rules of his own world—or people, or species—dictate. Talking dogs are no less doggy for their talking, and where natural laws allow for sorcery, magic is still mysterious but it is a serious fact, not just inexplicable fancy tricks stuck into a story for astonishment and flash. All the characters are very sane—in their own terms. It is their interaction that can verge on "madness."

SOME OF LEWIS'S MOST delightful creations grow out of this sense of appropriateness, especially when a new and different sort of creature appears and must be taken into account. His own favorite was the Marsh-Wiggle, Puddleglum:

> As they drew nearer, the figure turned its head and showed them a long thin face with rather sunken cheeks, a tightly shut mouth, a sharp nose, and no beard. It was wearing a high, pointed hat like a steeple, with an enormously wide flat brim. The hair, if it could be called hair, which hung over its large ears was greeny-grey, and each lock was flat rather than round, so that they were like tiny reeds. Its expression was solemn, its complexion muddy, and you could see at once that it took a serious view of life.

Puddleglum's pessimism is a trait of all Marsh-Wiggles, although he insists he's the most optimistic of his folk—"too full of bobance and bounce . . . got to learn that life isn't all fricasseed frogs and eel pie." His conversation covers a very steady and loyal spirit; it



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also frees Lewis's hand for comic turns:

"I'm trying to catch a few eels to make an eel stew for our dinner," said Puddleglum. "Though I shouldn't wonder if I didn't get any. And you won't like them much if I do."

"Why not?" asked Scrubb.

"Why, it's not in reason that you should like our sort of victuals, though I've no doubt you'll put a bold face on it. All the same, while I am a catching of them, if you two could try to light the fire—no harm trying—! The wood's behind the wigwam. It may be wet. You could light it inside the wigwam, and then we'd get all the smoke in our eyes. Or you could light it outside, and then the rain would come and put it out. Here's my tinder box. You wouldn't know how to use it, I expect?"

The less attractive (although no less compelling) aspect of finding real-life protagonists in a romance is having to face their faults and mistakes. Certainly, Lewis's villains behave badly, while Aslan is absolutely just and compassionate, but every mortal creature is a well-conceived and well-motivated blend. When Edmund first comes into Narnia in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,* he foolishly betrays his brother and sisters, siding with a witch. They have to rescue him later, in a series of fights, nasty and bloody:

Peter did not feel very brave: indeed, he felt he was going to be sick . . . he had just time to duck down and plunge in his sword, as hard as he could, between the brute's forelegs into its heart. Then came a horrible, confused moment like something in a nightmare. He was tugging and pulling and the Wolf seemed neither alive nor dead, and its bared teeth knocked against his forehead, and everything was blood and heat and hair . . .

EACH NARNIA BOOK involves a quest. *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* is an Odyssean exploration and a search for seven long-lost Narnian lords, *Prince Caspian* relates Narnia's liberation from the usurper Miraz, and so on. As in true medieval romance, the characters are continually faced with difficult choices, opportunities to go wrong. The understanding of right and wrong is always present, although often momentarily obscured. In these fateful situations, Lewis grasps and holds up moments that draw an adult at least as strongly as a child. The most painful of them occur in *The Last Battle*: Narnians betray other Narnians right and left, duped by a fake Aslan.

In *The Silver Chair*—a quest for the lost Prince Rilian—a series of test situations leads to a last, most difficult one. The Prince is found in the underground castle of the Lady of the Green Kirtle; she is actually a witch, the tyrant of the underworld, who has held him in an enchanted amnesia. She walks in on his release by Eustace and Jill and Puddleglum. Throwing a powder on the fire to produce a sweet, sedative perfume—tests are not always fair—she strums softly and monotonously on a mandolin as she slowly seduces them with talk. First she convinces them of the unreality of the Overworld (that is, the land at the earth's surface), then, of the sun:

. . . she added, with another of her soft, silver laughs, "You see? When you try to think out clearly what this *sun* must be, you cannot tell me. You can only tell me it is like the lamp. Your *sun* is a dream; and there is nothing in that dream that was not copied from the lamp. The lamp is the real thing; the *sun* is but a tale, a children's story."

The Lady's asphyxiating riddles and arguments overcome nearly all resistance, but by a crucial effort Puddleglum destroys her enchantment and swears, "I'm going to stand by the play world. I'm on Aslan's side even if there isn't any Aslan to lead it." Overtones of classic Christian faith are inescapable, as in so much of Narnia. But this Christianity is manifested only by allusion and analogy; it is not at all proselytising, but an inevitable form of Lewis's expression. Agnostics need not fear: The strength and happiness of it may convert readers to Lewis, but not to Christianity.

That Narnia does convince its younger readers was first attested by the many letters Lewis received from children: serious, credulous inquiries about the country. There is at least one instance on record of a child who chopped through his parents' wardrobe with an axe, trying to get into Narnia. Grown-ups who found Narnia as children can remember when they believed in it as fact. It works a sleight of hand trick on the memory: so much bright adventure, such brilliant scenery, so many echoes of stories and history from our world and others, that in the end the reader finds himself going back to the books, looking for favorite incidents, remembering and feeling nostalgia for more adventures than he ever actually read.

A word to book-buyers: The "Chronicles of Narnia" are available individually, in both hard and soft covers, as well as in the boxed set (paper). The paperbacks are badly made, and reproduce neither the quality nor the full set of original illustrations by Pauline Baynes. These graceful drawings add immeasurably to the stories, and therefore the hardcover books are recommended. Also, the publishers number the books in the order in which they were written, which is not the order in which the adventures take place. Lewis recommended the following order: *The Magician's Nephew; The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; The Horse and His Boy; Prince Caspian; The Voyage of the Dawn Treader; The Silver Chair; The Last Battle.*

THE ISRAELI SECRET SERVICE, by Richard Deacon. Taplinger, 318 pp., $9.95.

The Irgun's new clothes

RUSSELL STETLER

THE ISRAELI SECRET service, claims Richard Deacon, is essential to the survival of Western civilization as we know it. Not surprisingly, therefore, he finds justification for everything the Israeli spooks have ever done—including several episodes that the agencies themselves would rather forget. The effect is a bit like having the story of the emperor's new clothes told by a child who thinks his majesty's nudity is magnificent: every wart is described with naive and unconcealed delight.

Deacon seems to think of himself however, as a historian with a high ideological purpose. He is the author of books on the British, Russian, and Chinese secret services—as well as a *Who's Who in Spy Fiction* published under his real name, Donald McCormick. He believes and argues that given the holocaust, Israel has had no choice but to resort to the most ruthless covert activities, when faced with U.S. "appeasement" of the Arabs under Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy and the hostility of a "racially prejudiced United Nations."

RUSSELL STETLER reported on U.S. Middle East policy for Internews from 1973 to 1978. He is currently writing a biography of the late civil rights activist Clark Foreman.

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Readers may take issue with many of Deacon's opinions, but they should be grateful that he has produced such an uninhibited history of the Israeli intelligence agencies. (The Mossad—short for Institution for Intelligence and Special Assignments—is the main civilian covert agency; other agencies, including military intelligence and the internal security service, are also discussed in Deacon's book.)

Deacon correctly notes the continuity between the underground Zionist organizations that fought for Israel's creation, and the clandestine agencies that later served the fledgling state. Covert activities were crucial in the struggle to establish a Jewish nation. Networks had been created for gunrunning, industrial and scientific espionage, lobbying and intelligence-gathering in the world capitals, dirty tricks, misinformation to mislead the British, sabotage, and assassination. (UN mediator Count Bernadotte and Britain's Resident Minister in Cairo, Lord Moyne, were the most celebrated victims of successful assassination plots.) Although David Ben-Gurion, as Israel's first prime minister and defense minister, took steps to prevent the secret services from falling under the discipline of the more extreme factions of the Zionist movement (the Irgun and the Stern Gang), inevitably the official secret services drew heavily from the ranks of such groups.

Official Israeli agencies also resorted to Stern Gang tactics. The letter-bomb, for example, had been used by the Stern Gang against the British in 1948. Eight years later, bombs were mailed to Egyptian officials in Gaza and Jordan, and they became a main element in the Mossad's campaign to drive German scientists out of Egypt in the sixties. "The Israelis had been the first secret service in modern times to use the tactical weapon of the letter-bomb," Deacon admits, "but whereas this technique has been indiscriminately used by others since, the Mossad always concentrated entirely on the real culprits." Deacon himself reports, however, that even when the Israelis "concentrated" on real culprits, letter-bombs still blew up in the faces of secretaries and other innocent victims. Moreover, such terror tactics, rather than intimidating Israel's enemies, seem only to have served as an inspiration.

Much of Deacon's book simply highlights well-known chapters in the history of Israel's secret agents: the tracking and kidnapping of Adolf Eichmann, the successful infiltration by the "Champagne Spy" Wolfgang Lotz into the inner circles of Arab leaders, the daring removal of the five gunboats from Cherbourg harbor in defiance of the French arms embargo, and the unmasking of Ben-Gurion's intelligence liaison officer, Israel Beer, as a KGB agent-in-place. The informed reader will find nothing new on these subjects here.

But Deacon has obviously gone to many sources to cull interesting details on Israeli achievements in the methodology and technology of intelligence work. He credits Israel's computerized analysis of interview data from POW interrogations in 1956 with providing key insights for the 1967 campaign. When the "open bridges" policy between Jordan and the Israeli-occupied West Bank created enormous new risks of infiltration, Israeli intelligence responded by screening every entering Arab with a microwave respiration monitor that detects faster breathing rates. Anyone who failed this crude lie detector test could be subjected to intense interrogation. Deacon also believes the Israelis have been astute in sharing the KGB's interest in psychic espionage—including Kirlian photography and hypnotic behavior modification.

The most intriguing material in Deacon's book concerns the relationship between U.S. and Israeli intelligence agencies—and the influence of that relationship on U.S. policy in the Middle East. Deacon describes Western intelligence agencies generally and the CIA in particular as secretly sympathetic to Israel—sometimes in defiance of the policies of their governments. He reports the collusion of an Israeli agent inside the CIA in the notorious Lavon affair of 1954, in which Israelis posing as Egyptians planted bombs in U.S. buildings in Cairo and Alexandria. The hope was to turn the United States against Egyptian President Nasser by committing acts of terrorism that would then be blamed on Egypt. (With the aid of a double agent, the Egyptians foiled the plot and captured 11 Israeli agents.)

OFFHAND, ONE MIGHT have thought that a foreign secret service that tried to blow up U.S. buildings would merit the close and suspicious attention of the CIA. On the contrary. According to Deacon, "The CIA had been realistic enough to realize that the Eisenhower appeasement policy toward the Arab world would ultimately be disastrous for every American interest, military or economic. For this reason they had maintained a policy of allowing all intelligence operations in Israel to be carried out entirely by the Mossad." This last claim would appear to be exaggerated, but there is no doubt that the CIA's operations in Israel were handled in a unique way. They were separated from other CIA operations in the Middle East and were directed, for as yet unexplained reasons, by the CIA's chief of counterintelligence, James J. Angleton.

Deacon reports without elaboration that Angleton was instrumental in the CIA's providing Israel "with technical assistance in the nuclear field." It has been reported elsewhere that Angleton dispatched several nuclear scientists to Israel to augment the Israelis' theoretical knowledge with practical U.S. technological know-how. This collaboration was reportedly crucial to the creation of the Israeli nuclear reactor at Dimona, in the Negev desert, without which Israel could have no nuclear option in military terms.

There is no indication in Deacon's book that the CIA's implicit trust of Israel was reciprocated. At the time of the 1967 war, he reports, Israel violated a secret understanding with the United States not to involve Jordan in the war. And there is the case of the U.S. spy ship *Liberty*, which had been sent to monitor radio traffic in the eastern Mediterranean. Deacon avoids stating that the Israeli attack on the *Liberty* during the 1967 war was deliberate. His account leaves open the possibility of mistaken identity. But he also supplies a rationale, in case one might be needed, for ordering an attack on an ally's vessel: "If this ship continued to monitor Israeli signals and movements of forces on land, air and sea, there could be leakages from the State Department to the United Nations and, even worse, the latter, whose administrators were already biased against Israel, could pass on information to the Egyptians." Either way, the Israelis decided the ship had to be gotten rid of. But by then, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff had sent a message ordering the *Liberty*'s withdrawal. Two messages sent by the CIA were misrouted, the ship stayed, and Israeli jets and torpedo boats soon put

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it out of action—with U.S. casualties of 9 dead, 75 wounded, and 22 missing. Deacon raises the question whether an Israeli agent in the CIA might have sabotaged dispatch of the *Liberty*'s withdrawal order.

Although he properly refrains from speculating in these murky areas, Deacon also fails to perceive even the logical possibility of a conflict of interest between Israel and the West. He sees no danger in the CIA—or a group within it—pursuing a policy that is at odds with that of the U.S. government. To many observers, this danger is the ultimate horror of clandestine politics: the emergence of agencies operating not only in defiance of public accountability and international law, but even outside the control of the governments that created them. Far from being the saviors of Western values, such secret services have no greater claim to our trust than do those menaces from whom they would save us. ❑

***THE BUILDERS*, by Martin Mayer. W. W. Norton, 468 pp., $15.00.**

Government as termite

JOHN C. WEICHER

THE HIGH COST OF housing has been getting national attention in the past few years, featured even on the cover of *Time*. Martin Mayer, continuing his survey of American industries and professions with this study of home building, has an explanation for the price increases: "This whole long book," he says near the end of *The Builders*, "turns out to be, not by design, virtually a compendium of the ways that government actions have inflated housing costs."

His examples form an impressive array. Local and state governments have frequently driven up the price of land by restricting, through zoning and other means, the amount available for new housing. In some suburbs the authorities have decreed that there be sidewalks even in areas where the houses sit on one-acre lots and there are no pedestrians. Elsewhere they have required that streets within subdivisions be as wide as main traffic arteries. And the federal government has imposed restrictions on homes it will insure, sometimes absurd ones: Mayer tells of the proposal by the Federal Housing Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency that new homes in Phoenix have water softeners—which would ultimately have poisoned the city's water supply.

Mayer fears that all these regulations are pricing middle-income families out of the new home market: " 'Controlled growth' turns out to mean loading all the costs of growth on the newcomers, and giving all the benefits to the existing residents—especially those who had the best cabins on the ship before the political leaders lifted the gangplank."

Yet over the same period that costs have been increasing, so too have new home production and sales; 1977 and 1978 are the two best years on record. Even young families, with little chance to accumulate assets, have been buying homes in greater numbers. The incongruity exists partly because restrictions such as those mentioned above are not found everywhere; where they are too burdensome, builders have often responded by shifting to less developed, outlying counties, where the requirements are less onerous, and buyers have been willing to trade longer commuting times for lower home prices. More generally, perhaps, the improvements in building technology that Mayer describes so ably may be enough to offset the cost increases imposed by regulation.

It is impossible, however, to avoid—by moving or any other way—the largest cost increase generated by government, namely the higher mortgage interest rates resulting from inflation. Like many housing analysts, Mayer traces this problem back to the inflation created by the Great Society of President Lyndon Johnson, and offers a solution: "If the government could effectively manage the money supply to prevent inflation, every problem associated with housing would be infinitely more manageable." He does not expect this to happen, however, and offers instead several palliatives, including a national usury law and a requirement that pension funds and insurance companies invest some specified fraction of their assets in mortgages.

Unfortunately, neither of these proposals is likely to bring mortgage interest rates down. The usury ceiling, if enforced, would invite corruption and a black market in mortgages. The notion of "tapping the pension funds" has been around for more than two decades, but most financial market analysts have concluded that the new mortgage lending by pension funds would be almost entirely offset by reduced lending from the institutions now supplying money. Past government efforts to funnel funds into mortgages have ultimately succeeded in driving out about as much money as they have pushed into the market.

INTERWOVEN WITH THE description of home building is a review of federal housing policy. Mayer has a sense of the history of policy development. He devotes substantial attention to now-defunct programs, which would be unnecessary were it not that there are very few new ideas in housing policy; a new program is likely to be a combination of elements from earlier ones (Chinese-restaurant menu style), if indeed it is not merely an old program renamed. Mayer is especially effective in contrasting the claims of program advocates at the time they were initiated, with their later statements, and with the actual results of those programs. He reviews the plethora of programs from the last two decades, which have typically provided a reduced mortgage interest rate in the expectation that low-income families could then afford to rent or buy new housing. Mayer describes the results of one such program: "The federal Section 235 program [of 1968] . . . by encouraging poor people to purchase older homes they couldn't possibly maintain, helped transfer sound homes to owners who could do nothing with them, in the end, but run away." (Most housing programs are known by the numbers of the sections of the statutes creating them, perhaps because the English language is not rich in synonyms for "interest rate subsidy.") This program also had more than its share of scandals, as brokers bought old homes in deteriorating condition, made a few cosmetic repairs, and sold them to low-income buyers with a federally in-

JOHN C. WEICHER is senior research associate at the Urban Institute. He served as chief economist at the Department of Housing and Urban Development in 1975–1976.

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sured mortgage to eliminate any risk of loss.

The companion to the home purchase program, a rental housing program (Section 236), offered tax benefits to wealthy investors who could shelter part of their income by claiming accelerated depreciation on their housing investment. The program built a large volume of housing at costs of 10 to 20 percent above those for comparable private housing. Often neither the developer nor the investor was interested in maintaining the project after its tax benefits were used up. The result has been that, ten years after the program began (and five years after it was terminated), over 10 percent of the projects have defaulted, and others are solvent only because additional subsidies have been piled on top of the original interest rate reduction. "A good fraction," Mayer says, "had turned into slums."

Mayer writes not only about builders, but often from their point of view. Thus he is critical of the newest program, Section Eight, enacted in 1974 after the interest subsidies were suspended; Section Eight subsidizes poor tenants directly, rather than builders. Mayer complains that new housing under this program is extremely expensive, ignoring the fact that most of those receiving subsidies under Section Eight choose existing housing, and existing housing costs much less. Builders, of course, are not particularly interested in encouraging the occupancy of older housing.

As with his proposals for restraining costs, many of Mayer's policy recommendations for subsidy programs seem unworkable. He advocates a low-income ownership program for small apartment buildings, with the owner living in one apartment and maintaining the others. This program would be aimed particularly at "capable welfare mothers." Mayer's sense of history here deserts him—the consequences of Section 235 demonstrated the difficulties that low-income families have in maintaining homes, and there is no reason to expect that they could handle four, five, or six apartments more easily.

Mayer is thus better at diagnosis than prescription. But despite its limitations, *The Builders* is a readable, usually reliable introduction to housing and housing policy. It is especially useful for anyone who wants to know how we got into our present situation, if not how to get somewhere else. ❑

F I L M

***AN AUTUMN SONATA*, directed by Ingmar Bergman.**

***COMES A HORSEMAN*, directed by Alan J. Pakula.**

Spellbound by Ingrid

STEPHEN HARVEY

IN THE THREE DECADES that have passed since his first film, Ingmar Bergman's kinship with that dour American genius, Eugene O'Neill, has become ever more apparent. Both found their voices at first in the realm of somber, wistful melodrama, flirting during their middle years with self-conscious experiments in form, immersing themselves in myth, masks, and allegory. Just as with O'Neill, however, Bergman's meaningful work in his later years has consisted of more or less naturalistic chamber dramas that explore the anguish of human dependence and missed connections. At its most powerful, recent Bergman has the visceral intensity and psychological truth of the O'Neill of *Long Day's Journey into Night*, but his latest phase brings with it certain unavoidable problems. A movie like *The Serpent's Egg*, which attempted to venture beyond his staked-out territory, turned out to be little more than a bloated calamity. Yet by staying within his secure boundaries, Bergman risks recycling the same insights to the point of self-parody.

An Autumn Sonata is a return to the Bergman formulas we've become so familiar with in the last 10 years—a pair of antagonists, linked by blood, love, and guilt, trapped together both physically and metaphorically, shred the veil of decorum between them in order to rip at the jugular. Pain and venom spent, a tentative move is made at the fade-out to salve their mutually inflicted wounds. This may well be the year's most decidedly mixed movie blessing: Spare savagery and fustian portentousness, nuance and nonsense, are inseparably interwoven.

Having already unraveled the knots that bind sisters (*Cries and Whispers*), fathers and sons (*Through a Glass Darkly*), lovers (*The Passion of Anna*), and spouses (*Scenes from a Marriage*), Bergman eventually had to get around to dissecting the mother-daughter relationship. It was just as inevitable, and even more to be hoped for, that he should finally join forces with that other Bergman, namely Ingrid, Sweden's most durable gift to film acting. The collaboration between the two Bergmans has benefited both of them; he's provided her with the most demanding and meatiest role she's had in what is far too long a time, while her radiance and brio spark even the film's most inert moments. Considering her own nomadic career (Bergman hasn't made a feature film in her native language in 40 years), it was an inspiration to cast her as Charlotte, the cosmopolitan pianist come home for a brief sojourn. She understands the local ground rules, but can never be entirely at home within them, a circumstance that Bergman the actress effortlessly conveys.

Of all the film actresses of her generation, Bergman is the only one who continues to grow and to stretch her talents, who still has the capacity to surprise us. There's always been a contradiction in her screen presence between her air of self-sufficient composure and her warm simplicity, and throughout her career she's usually handled it by alternating between playing worldly sophisticates and big-spirited mothers (Superior or not)-of-us-all. Here the two aspects are fused into one complex characterization, and the film's greatest pleasure consists in watching her do it with such success.

During her reunion with her daughter, Eva, a rural parson's wife (Liv Ullmann, of course), as withdrawn as

STEPHEN HARVEY is INQUIRY's film reviewer. He is coordinator of the film study program, Museum of Modern Art, New York.

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Charlotte is extroverted, Bergman is required to pass through an astonishing variety of moods within one brief scene—vanity and fatigue, solicitude and egotism, grief over the loss of her late lover, guilt at her neglect of her family, and fury that her laxness should be called to her attention. With subtlety and economy, she lights briefly on one emotion and then imperceptibly shifts to the next, her face hardening and dissolving to meet the requirements of the moment. As she has managed to do from the start of her international career, Bergman has once more made the near-impossible seem easy and spontaneous.

THE IRONY IS THAT HER skill and the goodwill we bring to her as a performer eventually subvert all of Ingmar Bergman's intentions. With her simultaneous entrance into the closed world of the film and the house of her daughter, the brisk air of reality following in her wake only shows up her director's overfamiliar contrivances. Her costar has perhaps lived too long within the confines of this world; while Liv Ullmann's performance is technically impressive, we've seen her fumble toward a martyred state of grace at least once too often.

Once more Ullmann has been handed the obligatory monologue in which, glowing and aching, she expostulates on the grandeur of God's unfathomable scheme for mankind. Once more she valiantly shatters the shell of her passive compliance to rage out at her tormentor, gaining the upper hand before extending it in reconciliation. Neither she nor Bergman seems to notice what a drag this character has become, nor does the director seem to realize how appealing, in comparison, is Ingrid Bergman's sturdy self-assurance. At least in the past the Ullmann roles were granted a kind of sympathetic objectivity by their creator, but in *An Autumn Sonata*, Eva is practically canonized before the film comes to a close.

Intimidated by the mother whose love she never won, Eva is intended as the homespun counterpoint to the blithe and worldly Charlotte, but Ullmann makes her a case of arrested development if there ever was one. Encased in brown woolen jumpers with Peter Pan collars, her hair in a coiled braid, her eyes hidden behind a pair of granny glasses, and her mouth drooping wanly at Mommy's mastery of a Chopin prelude, Ullmann projects a frumpiness that's practically a TV–sketch travesty of itself. Yet this character is not only meant seriously, she is positively exalted. Everyone loves her except for Mother, who is too self-centered to perceive what an unpolished gem she is. The husband who abjectly depends on her, the palsy-afflicted sister whom she uncomplainingly nurses, even, presumably, her dead infant son, whose memory she alone is committed to perpetuating. One waits in vain for Bergman (Ingmar, that is) to give a sign that he sees through her smug torpor. But the film's frenzied climax, when Ullmann spews out her stored litany of resentment against her mother's misdeeds, tips Bergman's hand completely.

It's Mother, it turns out, who's responsible for all that's gone awry in her daughter's life, as well as the physical afflictions of the invalid upstairs, who, at this very moment, is crawling downstairs, crying for solace from Mother. Now as ever, Mother ignores her. One would have thought that this attitude of lifelong reproach would be confined to self-pitying adolescents and, lately, the grown children of movie stars no longer around to defend themselves, but it's clear throughout that Bergman identifies completely with this point of view. In the queasiest way imaginable, *An Autumn Sonata* turns out to be the wish fulfillment of any child who feels his parents once wronged him unforgivably and has cherished his rancor ever since.

Finally the tables are turned; Mommy is forced to confront her sins and at long last to plead penitently for the chance to redeem herself. Never mind any nagging notions you might have that the offspring's pious candor resembles nothing so much as the flip side of masochism, or that at a certain point men and women should take on responsibility for their own lives and mistakes. (I won't dwell on Bergman's increasingly offensive use of illness as a metaphor for emotional neglect. There's something exceedingly distasteful about using an offspring's grave physical condition as a weapon to flay a mother for not having loved her children enough.)

The denouement is even more odiously self-righteous. After musing on the fact that she would gladly kill herself if she weren't sure that God still needed her to carry out His tasks on earth, Eva decides to make her peace with her mother—not because the mother deserves it, mind you, but as yet another demonstration of the daughter's sublime goodness of heart.

Noxious as all this is, however, Bergman has so consummately crafted the whole that *An Autumn Sonata* is almost persuasive in spite of itself. Alternating harsh, tight close-ups of Ullmann's thrusts and Bergman's parries, the director generates real fire and tension in the culminating scenes, as much through the rhythms of his editing, as the virtuosity of the two performers. The main prerequisite of all the actresses in Bergman's circle is the ability to open up to the emotional rigors of his gaze as it relentlessly closes in on them. Ingrid Bergman is the perfect subject for such scrutiny, as this has always been her most potent talent. Movies far slighter than this one have been made unforgettable because of a glimpse of her radiance and depth of feeling expressed in close-up.

However irritating the film's view-

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point becomes, *An Autumn Sonata* is never less than engrossing. But the achievement, finally, is Ingrid's; when last seen, the character she plays is on a train leaving her homeland, this chapter of her life closed, and she's nattering on to her agent about past triumphs and future challenges. Ingrid Bergman has likewise persevered, from Sweden to Hollywood to Rome and back, vitalizing her gifts every so often by linking forces with the most exacting film artists on both continents. Doubtless she'll continue to do the same whenever the opportunity arises. The challenge is hers, but the pleasure is all ours.

LIKE LIV ULLMANN, Jane Fonda presently seems hemmed in by the image she has created for herself. Once the firebrand "radical" outsider, with changing times she is now the icon of the liberal pop-culture establishment, and the roles she has elected to perform have followed suit. In the few choice films that came her way in earlier times, she represented the disenfranchised and the exploited *(They Shoot Horses, Klute)*, and was caustic and contemptuous toward a society that excluded such people. Now that Fonda has become respectable, so have her movie heroines. Since *Julia*, the women she plays are no mere characters—they're no less than role models, meant to inspire and uplift, their progression from titles to end-credits following an upward curve toward self-awareness and fulfillment. All well and good, but the fact remains that none of her recent work can touch her accomplishments in the films from her "alienated" phase. The excitement Fonda once brought to her work derived largely from her sharp-honed, urban humor, the defense mechanism of the loser pitting herself for sheer survival against forces larger than she is. Losers now, of course, are out, as retrogressive models in the extreme —yet while Fonda may have won the battle, in the process she has temporarily mislaid her greatest gifts as an actress. What's left are her earnestness and her undoubted expertise, but at this point she runs the risk of turning into a female Charlton Heston with talent.

Comes a Horseman takes her one step further down this path. Cast as an embattled Montana rancher in the last days of World War II, Fonda works awfully hard to get all the details right—the determined, denimed stride; tight-lipped, relentless gaze; terse nasal accent, and all. It's a classy show of technique, but what we're asked to applaud is Fonda's concentration; yet her dogged determination only draws our attention away from the character she's impersonating. The movie framing Fonda recalls all the more lamentable aspects of *Coming Home* and *Julia*—straining all too visibly for a semblance of importance, it's weighed down by the portentousness of its intentions. Intended as a testament to individualism, *Comes a Horseman* is really just a grade B western with delusions of grandeur. There's the power-mad land baron (Jason Robards glowering in the shadows) who'll stop at nothing to gain his ends, and a cattle roundup accompanied by The-Big-Country music booming over the soundtrack—damned if the finale doesn't find our beleaguered heroine and her stalwart partner (James Caan) tied up inside a burning building, freeing themselves in time for the showdown in the dusty corral. All of this has been ridden to extinction in one oater after another—even the leathery western heroine softened by love hearkens back to Barbara Stanwyck's innumerable forays onto the prairie back in the fifties.

None of which would matter much if *Comes a Horseman* had some of the energy of its predecessors, but every scene dawdles in its tracks far too long, futilely trying to derive some resonance and meaning out of all the genre clichés. Apart from the movie's veneer of craftsmanship, it's hard to believe that the director, Alan J. Pakula, is the same man who once directed *Klute*. *Comes a Horseman* seems an object lesson in the seventies' truth that power doesn't always corrupt—sometimes it just defuses.

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LETTERS

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Abolitionists again

IT WAS GRATIFYING TO SEE your editorial, "Abolish the CIA" [*INQUIRY*, July 10, 1978]. I thought you might be interested to know that the Board of the American Friends Service Committeee came to the same conclusion over two years ago. Since that time the AFSC has received, through the Freedom of Information Act, about 10,000 pages of files on the AFSC from the CIA, FBI, and some dozen other federal agencies. Needless to say, there is no indication of wrongdoing by the AFSC in any of these files, which were begun in 1921!

The two years which have passed since the Board's action have only strengthened our conviction that reform of the CIA and the Internal Security Division of the FBI is impossible, and that the correct procedure is to abolish them outright.

I am impressed with *INQUIRY*'s clarity and forcefulness, and wish you all success.

MARGARET BACON
American Friends Service Committee
Philadelphia, Penn.

The boycott that won't work

*YOUR EDITORIAL, "BLOCK-*ing an avenue of change" [*INQUIRY*, July 24, 1978], was appropriately titled. Unfortunately, you are incorrect in your statements favoring the ERA boycott. It is, in fact, the boycott that is impeding the progress of the Equal Rights Amendment.

You refer to those of us who oppose the boycott as "twisting and turning the language of politics." According to *INQUIRY*, our only arguments are that the boycott coerces and threatens. But the boycott is ineffective. Not only that, it acts in a negative fashion, making it even more difficult for ERA to be ratified.

Consider the following: Not one state has ratified the amendment since the boycott began. If you check the voting records in the various states, you will find most legislators who represent large metropolitan areas favor ERA. It is the rural and suburban legislators who form the heart of the opposition. And yet, the boycott directly affects only those legislators who favor the amendment: the representatives of the urban communities, that stand to lose business.

Most rural legislators have few concerns about what happens in the city. In fact, because of the urban-rural legislative conflicts, the small-towners are happy to see the big cities in hot water in some circumstances. Certainly, they will not vote for ERA because of the boycott.

Not only has the boycott been ineffective in campaigning for the votes that are needed, it has also forced ratification efforts to take a step backward. The ERA opposition now has a plausible argument with which to discredit ERA supporters in the eyes of legislators. Opponents can point to the economically unethical tactics of the supporters. Despite how *INQUIRY* may feel about the legitimacy of such an assertion, many legislators give it merit.

LINDA R. ALLEN
Springfield, Ill.

The family farmer

STEPHEN CHAPMAN'S "THE great western water swindle" [*INQUIRY*, Sept. 18, 1978] is a perfect example of the kind of intellectual arrogance and cultural elitism that makes your magazine so perversely delightful. I haven't had my adrenal output stimulated as delightfully since the glory days of Spiro Agnew.

What got the juices flowing wasn't so much Chapman's condemnation of pork-barrel water projects (though one man's pork barrel is another man's justifiable investment in the national interest), as it was his blissfully ignorant stereotyping of American agriculture as being run out of corporate boardrooms presided over by latter-day Robber Barons.

Out here in what Chapman would, I'm sure, refer to as the hinterlands, we are in the throes of a throat-cutting battle over one of the projects on President Carter's hit list—the Oahe Project. And contrary to his benighted view, there really are farmers out here who are militantly opposed to what they consider an expensive, basically inefficient water delivery system.

On the other hand, there are also people out here who believe that the project can bring tremendous economic benefits to the entire area. The point is—are you listening, Mr. Chapman?—that any attempt to lump the many diverse factions in the American agricultural community into one conglomerate entity is like saying, If you've seen one slum, you've seen 'em all.

One last note. I wonder if Chapman realizes that the one way the Robber Barons *can* take over agriculture is by driving out the small family farmer, whose year-to-year production is subject to an incredible number of environmental and economic variables. And a subsidy program is his only cushion against disaster.

Hey, Steve, it ain't as easy as sticking a seed in the ground.

RICK FOYS
Aberdeen, S.D.

No form of cultural elitism in America has been more influential, or more expensive, than the myth of the family farmer, backbone of the republic. But Stephen Chapman, a native Texan and former farmhand, doesn't buy the myth. As anyone who carefully read his article knows, the real issue is not corporate farmers versus family farmers, but the subsidies the majority of us pay, through our tax bills and electric rates, to underwrite the economic well-being of a small minority. Indeed, as Chapman shows, these subsidies, while benefiting farmers in western states, have hurt farmers elsewhere in the country.

We don't doubt that farming is tough business, but farmers are businessmen, not nature's yeomen. If that's intellectual arrogance or cultural elitism, we plead guilty. –EDITORS

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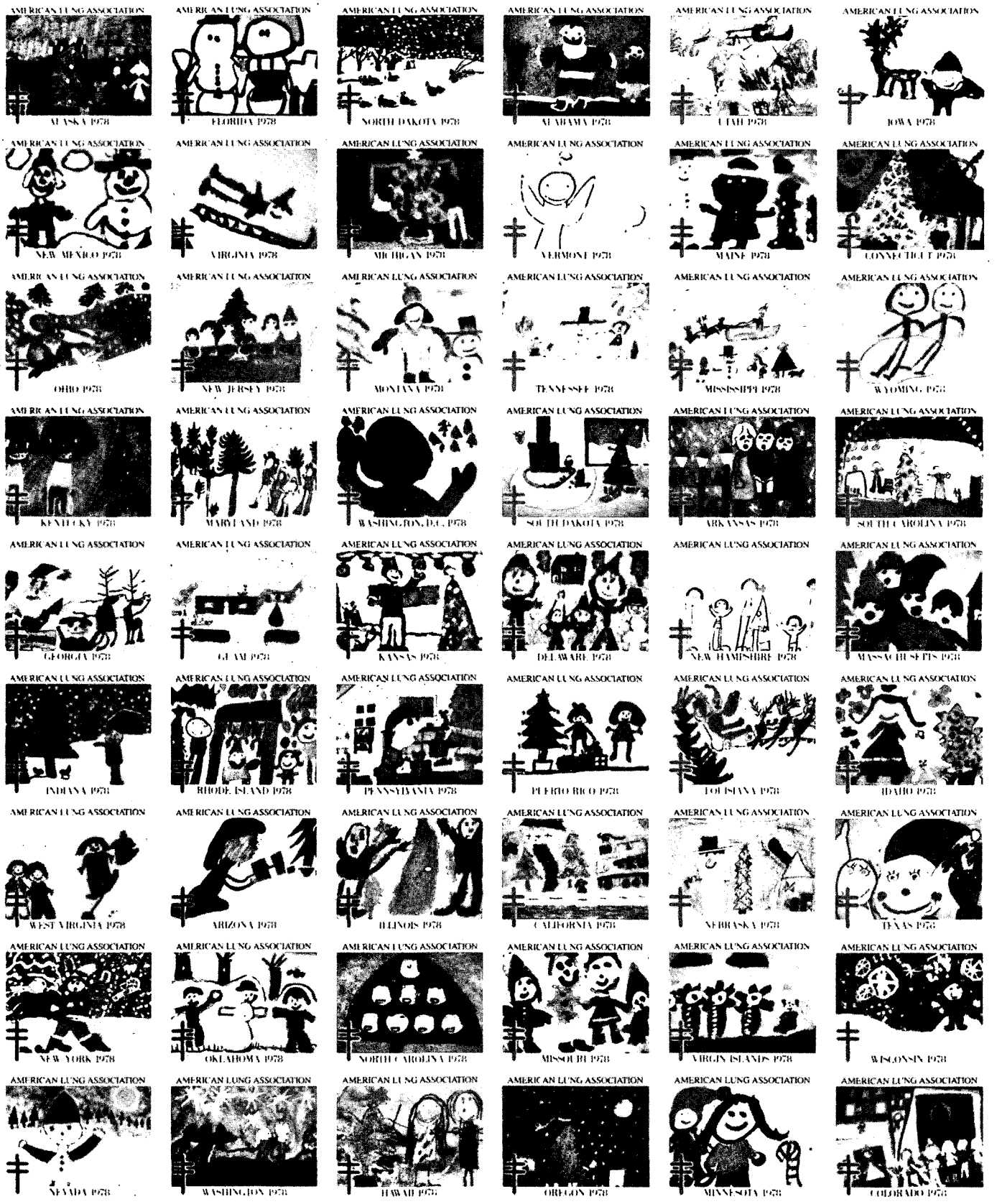

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